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THE BRITISH THEATRE,

OR,

A COLLECTION OF PLAYS,

WHICH ARE ACTED AT

THE THEATRES ROYAL,

DRURY LANE, COVENT GARDEN, AND HAYMARKET.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOKS.

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WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL REMARKS,

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

IN TWENTY-FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. X.

TAMERLANE.
FAIR PENITENT.
JANE SHORE.
LADY JANE GREY.
SIEGE OF DAMASCUS.

LONDON:

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WILLIAM BYFORD, PRINTER,
HEDFORD SQUARE.

Mr. H. Well, well, go, do.

Jarcis. A raven that bodes nothing but mischief; a coffin and cross bones; a bundle of rue; a sprig of deadly nightshade; a——

[HONEYWOOD *stopping his mouth at last, pushes him off.* [*Exit* JARVIS.

Mr. H. I must own my old monitor is not entirely wrong. There is something in my friend Croaker's conversation that quite depresses me. His very mirth is an antidote to all gaiety, and his appearance has a stronger effect on my spirits than an undertaker's shop.—Mr. Croaker, this is such a satisfaction——

Enter CROAKER.

Croak. A pleasant morning to Mr. Honeywood, and many of them.—How is this?—You look most shockingly to-day, my dear friend. I hope this weather does not affect your spirits. To be sure, if this weather continues—I say nothing—But God send we be all better this day three months.

Mr. H. I heartily concur in the wish, though I own, not in your apprehensions.

Croak. May be not. Indeed what signifies what weather we have in a country going to ruin like ours? Taxes rising, and trade falling.—Money flying out of the kingdom, and Jesuits swarming into it. I know at this time no less than a hundred and seven Jesuits between Charing Cross and the Bar.

Mr. H. The Jesuits will scarce meddle with you, I should hope.

Croak. May be not. Indeed they pervert, in a country where to lose a I am only afraid to

Mr. H. I have no apprehensions, assure you.

Croak. May be not. Indeed, what signifies whether they be perverted or no? The women, in my time, were good for something. I have seen a lady dressed from top to toe in her own manufactures formerly. But now-a-days, the devil a thing of their own manufactures about them, except their faces.

Mr H. But, however these faults may be practised abroad, you don't find them at home, either with Mrs. Croaker, Olivia, or Miss Richland.

Croak. The best of them will never be canonized for a saint when she is dead.—By the bye, my dear friend, I don't find this match between Miss Richland and my son, much relished, either by one side or the other.

Mr. H. I thought otherwise.

Croak. Ah, Mr. Honeywood, a little of your fine serious advice to the young lady might go far: I know she has a very exalted opinion of your understanding.

Mr H. But would not that be usurping an authority, that more properly belongs to yourself?

Croak. My dear friend, you know but little of my authority at home. People think, indeed, because they see me come out in the morning thus, with a pleasant face, and to make my friends merry, that all's well within. But I have cares that would break a heart of stone.—My wife has so encroached upon all of my privileges, that I am now no more than a lodger in my own house.

Did a little spirit exerted on your side restore your authority.

Why, had I had the spirit of a lion! I do confess—what then! Always haggling for fear of getting the better of the victory.

Where consideration indeed, can produce our greatest

anxieties, and that an increase of our possessions is but an inlet to new disquietudes.

Croak. Ah, my dear friend, these were the very words of poor Dick Doleful to me not a week before he made away with himself.—Indeed, Mr. Honeywood, I never see you but you put me in mind of poor Dick.—Ah, there was merit neglected for you! and so true a friend! we loved each other for thirty years, and yet he never asked me to lend him a single farthing.

Mr. H. Pray what could induce him to commit so rash an action at last?

Croak. I don't know; some people were malicious enough to say, it was keeping company with me; because we used to meet now and then, and open our hearts to each other. To be sure, I loved to hear him talk, and he loved to hear me talk—poor, dear Dick! He used to say, that Croaker rhimed to Joker; and so we used to laugh—poor Dick! [*Going to cry.*

Mr. H. His fate affects me.

Croak. Ay, he grew sick of this miserable life, where we do nothing but eat and grow hungry, dress and undress, get up and lie down; while reason should watch like a nurse by our side, falls asleep as we do.

Mr. H. To say truth, if we compare that future life which is to come, by that which we have, the prospect is hideous.

Croak. Life, at the greatest and best, is but a froward child, that must be humoured and coaxed a little, till it falls asleep, and then all the care is over.

Mr. H. Very true, sir, nothing can exceed the vanity of our existence but the folly of our pursuits. We wept when we came into the world, and every day tells us why.

Croak. Ah, my dear friend, it is a pert[illegible] tion to be miserable with you. My [illegible] shan't lose the benefit of such fine [illegible]

I'll just step home for him.—I am willing to show him so much seriousness in one scarce older than himself—And what if I bring my last letter to the Gazetteer on the increase and progress of earthquakes It will amuse us, I promise you. I there prove how the late earthquake is coming round to pay us another visit from London to Lisbon, from Lisbon to the Canary Islands, from the Canary Islands to Palmyra, from Palmyra to Constantinople, and so from Constantinople back to London again. [*Exit.*

Mr. H. Poor Croaker! His situation deserves the utmost pity I shall scarcely recover my spirits these three days. Sure to live upon such terms is worse than death itself. And yet, when I consider my own situation, a broken fortune, an hopeless passion, friends in distress; the wish but not the power to serve them—— [*Pausing and sighing.*

Enter BUTLER.

Butler. More company below, sir; Mrs. Croaker and Miss Richland,—Shall I show them up —Oh, I may save myself the trouble, for they're showing up themselves. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. CROAKER, *and* MISS RICHLAND.

Miss R. You're always in such spirits!

Mrs. C. We have just come, my dear Honeywood, fr[illegible] auction.—There was the old deaf dowager, as [illegible], bidding like a fury against herself.—And th[illegible] curious in antiques! herself the most genu[illegible]e of antiquity in the whole collection.

[illegible]. Excuse me, ladies, if some uneasiness [illegible]ship makes me unfit to share in this good [illegible]know you'll pardon me.

[illegible]ow, he seems as melancholy as if he

had taken a dose of my husband this morning. Well, if Richland here can pardon you, I must.

Miss R. You would seem to insinuate, madam, that I have particular reasons for being disposed to refuse it.

Mrs. C. Whatever I insinuate, my dear, don't be so ready to wish an explanation.

Miss R. I own I should be sorry, Mr. Honeywood's long friendship and mine, should be misunderstood.

Mr. H. There's no answering for others, madam. But I hope you'll never find me presuming to offer more than the most delicate friendship may readily allow.

Miss R. And I shall be prouder of such a tribute from you, than the most passionate professions from others.

Mr. H. My own sentiments, madam: friendship is a disinterested commerce between equals; love, an abject intercourse between tyrants and slaves.

Miss R. And, without a compliment, I know none more disinterested, or more capable of friendship, than Mr. Honeywood.

Mrs. C. And, indeed, I know nobody that has friends, at least among the ladies. Miss Fruzz, Mrs. Odbody, and Miss Winterbottom, praise him in all companies. As for Miss Biddy Bundle, she's a professed admirer.

Miss R. Indeed! an admirer! I did not know, sir, you were such a favourite there. But is she seriously so handsome? Is she the mighty thing talk'd of?

Mr. H. The town, madam, seldom begins to praise a lady's beauty, till she's beginning to [illegible]

Mrs. C. But she's resolved never to [illegible] seems. For as her natural face decays, her [illegible] proves in making the artificial one. [illegible] diverts me more than one of those

things, who thinks to conceal her age, by every where exposing her person;—sticking herself up in the front of a side-box—trailing through a minuet at Almack's—and then, in the public gardens—looking for all the world like one of the painted ruins of the place.

Mr. H. Every age has its admirers, ladies. While you, perhaps, are trading among the warmer climates of youth, there ought to be some to carry on an useful commerce in the frozen latitudes beyond fifty.

Miss R. But then the mortifications they must suffer, before they can be fitted out for traffic. I have seen one of them fret a whole morning at her hair-dresser, when all the fault was her face.

Mr. H. And yet I'll engage has carried that face at last to a very good market. This goodnatured town, madam, has husbands, like spectacles, to fit every age, from fifteen to fourscore.

Mrs. C. Well, you're a dear, goodnatured creature. But you know you're engaged with us this morning upon a strolling party. I want to show Olivia the town, and the things;—I believe I shall have business for you for the whole day.

Mr. H. I am sorry, madam, I have an appointment with Mr. Croaker, which it is impossible to put off.

Mrs. C. What! with my husband! Then I'm resolved to take no refusal.—Nay, I protest you must.—You know I never laugh so much as with you.

Mr. H. Why, if I must, I must. I'll swear you have put me into such spirits!—Well, do you find jest, and I'll find laugh; I promise you.—We'll wait for the chariot in the next room. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LEONTINE *and* OLIVIA.

[redacted] they go, thoughtless and happy: my [redacted] what would I give to see you capable

of sharing in their amusements, and as cheerful as they are!

Olivia. How, my Leontine—how can I be cheerful, when I have so many terrors to oppress me? The fear of being detected by this family, and the apprehensions of a censuring world, when I must be detected—

Leon. The world! my love, what can it say? At worst it can only say that, being compelled by a mercenary guardian to embrace a life you disliked, you formed a resolution of flying with the man of your choice; that you confided in his honour, and took refuge in my father's house; the only one where yours could remain without censure.

Olivia. But, consider, Leontine, your disobedience and my indiscretion: your being sent to France, to bring home a sister; and, instead of a sister, bringing home——

Leon. One dearer than a thousand sisters. One that I am convinced will be equally dear to the rest of the family when she comes to be known.

Olivia. And that, I fear, will shortly be.

Leon. Impossible, till we ourselves think proper to make the discovery. My sister, you know, has been with her aunt, at Lyons, since she was a child, and you find every creature in the family takes you for her.

Olivia. But mayn't she write, mayn't her aunt write?

Leon. Her aunt scarce ever writes, and all my sister's letters are directed to me.

Olivia. But won't your refusing Miss Richland, for whom you know the old gentleman intends you, create a suspicion?

Leon. There, there's my master stroke. I have resolved not to refuse her; nay, an hour hence, I have resented to go with my father to make her an offer of my heart and fortune.

Olivia. Your heart and fortune!

Leon. Don't be alarmed, my dearest. Can Olivia think so meanly of my honour or my love, as to suppose I could ever hope for happiness from any but her? No, my Olivia, neither the force, nor, permit me to add, the delicacy of my passion, leave any room to suspect me. I only offer Miss Richland a heart I am convinced she will refuse; as I am confident that, without knowing it, her affections are fixed upon Mr. Honeywood.

Olivia. Mr. Honeywood! You'll excuse my apprehensions; but when your merits come to be put in the balance——

Leon. You view them with too much partiality. However, by making this offer, I shew a seeming compliance with my father's commands; and perhaps, upon her refusal, I may have his consent to choose for myself

Olivia. Well, I submit. And yet, my Leontine, I own I shall envy her even your pretended addresses. I consider every look, every expression of your esteem, as due only to me. This is folly, perhaps:—I allow it; but it is natural to suppose that merit, which has made an impression on one's own heart, may be powerful over that of another.

Leon. Don't, my life's treasure, don't let us make imaginary evils, when you know we have so many real ones to encounter. At worst, you know, if Miss Richland should consent, or my father refuse his pardon, it can but end in a trip to Scotland; and——

Enter CROAKER.

Croak. Where have you been, boy? I have been seeking you. My friend Honeywood here has been saying such comfortable things. Ah! he's an example indeed! Where is he? I left him here.

Leon. Sir, I believe you may see him and hear him

too in the next room: he's preparing to go out with the ladies.

Croak. Good gracious! can I believe my eyes, or my ears? I'm struck dumb with his vivacity, and stunned with the loudness of his laugh. Was there ever such a transformation! [*A Laugh behind the Scenes,* CROAKER *mimics it.*] Ha! ha! ha! there it goes: a plague take their balderdash; yet I could expect nothing less, when my precious wife was of the party. On my conscience, I believe she could spread a horse-laugh through the pews of a tabernacle.

Leon. Since you find so many objections to a wife, sir, how can you be so earnest in recommending one to me?

Croak. I have told you, and tell you again, boy, that Miss Richland's fortune must not go out of the family; one may find comfort in the money, whatever one does in the wife.

Leon. But, sir, though in obedience to your desire I am ready to marry her, it may be possible she has no inclination to me.

Croak. I'll tell you once for all, how it stands. A good part of Miss Richland's large fortune consists in a claim upon government, which my good friend, Mr. Lofty, assures me the treasury will allow. One half of this she is to forfeit, by her father's will, in case she refuses to marry you. So, if she rejects you, we seize half her fortune; if she accepts you, we seize the whole, and a fine girl into the bargain.

Leon. But, sir, if you will but listen to reason—

Croak. Come, then, produce your reasons. I tell you I'm fixed, determined—so now produce your reasons. When I'm determined, I always listen to reason, because it can then do no harm.

Leon. You have alleged that a mutual choice was the first requisite in matrimonial happiness.

Croak. Well, and you have both of you a mutual

choice. She has her choice—to marry you, or lose half her fortune; and you have your choice—to marry her, or pack out of doors without any fortune at all.

Leon. An only son, sir, might expect more indulgence.

Croak. An only father, sir, might expect more obedience; besides, has not your sister here, that never disobliged me in her life, as good a right as you? He's a sad dog, Livy, my dear, and would take all from you. But he shan't, I tell you he shan't, or you shall have your share.

Olivia. Dear sir, I wish you'd be convinced that I can never be happy in any addition to my fortune which is taken from his.

Croak. Well, well, 'tis a good child, so say no more; but come with me, and we shall see something that will give us a great deal of pleasure, I promise you; old Ruggins, the curry-comb maker, lying in state; I'm told he makes a very handsome corpse, and becomes his coffin prodigiously. He was an intimate friend of mine, and these are friendly things we ought to do for each other. [*Exeunt*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

CROAKER'S *House.*

Enter MISS RICHLAND *and* GARNET.

Miss R. Olivia not his sister? Olivia not Leontine's sister? You amaze me!

Gar. No more his sister than I am; I had it all from his own servant; I can get any thing from that quarter.

Miss R. But how? Tell me again, Garnet.

Gar. Why, madam, as I told you before, instead of going to Lyons to bring home his sister, who has been there with her aunt these ten years, he never went further than Paris; there he saw, and fell in love with this young lady; by the bye, of a prodigious family.

Miss R. And brought her home to my guardian, as his daughter?

Gar. Yes, and daughter she will be. If he don't consent to their marriage, they talk of trying what a Scotch parson can do.

Miss R. Well, I own they have deceived me—And so demurely as Olivia carried it too!—Would you believe it, Garnet, I told her all my secrets; and yet the sly cheat concealed all this from me.

Gar. And, upon my word, madam, I don't much blame her; she was loath to trust one with her secrets, that was so very bad at keeping her own.

Miss R. But, to add to their deceit, the young gentleman, it seems, pretends to make me serious proposals. My guardian and he are to be here presently, to open the affair in form. You know I am to lose half my fortune, if I refuse him.

Gar. Yet, what can you do? For being, as you are, in love with Mr. Honeywood, madam—

Miss R. How! Idcot; what do you mean? In love with Mr. Honeywood! Is this to provoke me?

Gar. That is, madam, in friendship with him—I meant nothing more than friendship, as I hope to be married—nothing more.

Miss R. Well, no more of this! As to my guardian, and his son, they shall find me prepared to receive them; I'm resolved to accept their proposal

with seeming pleasure, to mortify them by compliance, and so throw the refusal at last upon them.

Gar. Delicious! and that will secure your whole fortune to yourself. Well, who could have thought so innocent a face could cover so much cuteness!

Miss R. Why, girl, I only oppose my prudence to their cunning, and practise a lesson they have taught me against themselves.

Gar. Then you're likely not long to want employment, for here they come, and in close conference.

Enter CROAKER *and* LEONTINE.

Leon. Excuse me, sir, if I seem to hesitate upon the point of putting the lady so important a question.

Croak. Lord! good sir, moderate your fears: you're so plaguy shy, that one would think you had changed sexes. I tell you we must have the half or the whole. Come, let me see with what spirit you begin. Well, why don't you? Eh! What? Well then I must, it seems—Miss Richland, my dear, I believe you guess at our business; an affair which my son here comes to open, that nearly concerns your happiness.

Miss R. Sir, I should be ungrateful not to be pleased with any thing that comes recommended by you.

Croak. How, boy! could you desire a finer opening? Why don't you begin, I say? [*To* LEONTINE.

Leon. 'Tis true, madam—my father, madam, has some intentions—hem—of explaining an affair—— which—himself—can best explain, madam.

Croak. Yes, my dear: it comes entirely from my son; it's all a request of his own, madam. And I will permit him to make the best of it.

Leon. The whole affair is only this, madam; my

father has a proposal to make, which he insists none but himself shall deliver.

Croak. My mind misgives me, the fellow will never be brought on—[*Aside.*]—In short, madam, you see before you one that loves you; one, whose whole happiness is all in you.

Miss R. I never had any doubts of your regard, sir; and I hope you can have none of my duty.

Croak. That's not the thing, my little sweeting; my love! No, no, another guess lover than I; there he stands, madam—his very looks declare the force of his passion—Call up a look, you dog—But then, had you seen him, as I have, weeping, speaking soliloquies and blank verse, sometimes melancholy, and sometimes absent—

Miss R. I fear, sir, he's absent now; or such a declaration would have come most properly from himself.

Croak. Himself, madam! he would die before he could make such a confession; and if he had not a channel for his passion through me, it would, ere now, have drowned his understanding.

Miss R. I must grant, sir, there are attractions in modest diffidence, above the force of words. A silent address is the genuine eloquence of sincerity.

Croak. Madam, he has forgot to speak any other language; silence is become his mother tongue.

Miss R. And it must be confessed, sir, it speaks very powerfully in his favour. And yet, I shall be thought too forward in making such a confession; Shan't I, Mr. Leontine?

Leon. Confusion! my reserve will undo me. But, if modesty attracts her, impudence may disgust her. I'll try. [*Aside.*] Don't imagine from my silence, madam, that I want a due sense of the honour and happiness intended me. My father, madam, tells me, your humble servant, is not totally indifferent to you. He admires you; I adore you; and when we

come together, upon my soul, I believe we shall be the happiest couple in all St. James's.

Miss R. If I could flatter myself, you thought as you speak, sir,——

Leon. Doubt my sincerity, madam? By your dear self, I swear. Ask the brave, if they desire glory—ask cowards, if they covet safety——

Croak. Well, well, no more questions about it.

Leon. Ask the sick, if they long for health—ask misers, if they love money—ask——

Croak. Ask a fool, if he can talk nonsense! What's come over the boy?—What signifies asking, when there's not a soul to give you an answer? If you would ask to the purpose, ask this lady's consent to make you happy.

Miss R. Why, indeed, sir, his uncommon ardour almost compels me—forces me to comply: And yet, I'm afraid he'll despise a conquest gained with too much ease; won't you, Mr. Leontine?

Leon. Confusion! [*Aside.*] O by no means, madam, by no means. And yet, madam, you talked of force. There is nothing I would avoid so much as compulsion in a thing of this kind. No, madam, I will still be generous, and leave you at liberty to refuse.

Croak. But I tell you, sir, the lady is not at liberty.—It's a match. You see she says nothing—Silence gives consent.

Leon. But, sir, she talked of force. Consider, sir, the cruelty of constraining her inclinations.

Croak. But I say there's no cruelty. Don't you know, blockhead, that girls have always a roundabout way of saying yes before company? So get you both gone together into the next room, and hang him that interrupts the tender explanation. Get you gone, I say; I'll not hear a word.

Leon. But, sir, I must beg leave to insist——

Croak. Get off, you puppy, or I'll beg leave to in-

sist upon knocking you down. Stupid whelp! But I don't wonder—the boy takes entirely after his mother. [*Exeunt* MISS RICH. *and* LEONTINE.

Enter MRS. CROAKER.

Mrs. C. Mr. Croaker, I bring you something, my dear, that I believe will make you smile.

Croak. I'll hold you a guinea of that, my dear.

Mrs. C. A letter; and, as I knew the hand, I ventured to open it.

Croak. And how can you expect your breaking open my letters should give me pleasure?

Mrs. C. Poo! its from your sister at Lyons, and contains good news:—read it.

Croak. What a Frenchified cover is here! That sister of mine has some good qualities, but I could never teach her to fold a letter.

Mrs. C. Fold a fiddlestick! Read what it contains.

Croak. [*Reading.*]

Dear Nick,

An English gentleman, of large fortune, has for some time made private, though honourable, proposals to your daughter Olivia. They love each other tenderly, and I find she has consented, without letting any of the family know, to crown his addresses. As such, good offers don't come every day, your own good sense, his large fortune, and family considerations, will induce you to forgive her.

Yours ever,

RACHEL CROAKER.

My daughter Olivia privately contracted to a man of large fortune! This is good news indeed.—My heart never foretold me of this. And yet, how slily the little baggage has carried it since she came home.

Not a word on't to the old ones, for the world. Yet I thought I saw something she wanted to conceal.

Mrs. C. Well, if they have concealed their amour, they sha'n't conceal their wedding; that shall be public, I'm resolved.

Croak. I tell thee, woman, the wedding is the most foolish part of the ceremony. I can never get this woman to think of the more serious part of the nuptial engagement.

Mrs. C. What, would you have me think of their funeral? But come, tell me, my dear, don't you owe more to me than you care to confess? Would you have ever been known to Mr. Lofty, who has undertaken Miss Richland's claim at the Treasury, but for me? Who was it first made him an acquaintance at Lady Shabbaroon's rout? Who got him to promise us his interest? Is not he a backstairs favourite, one that can do what he pleases with those that do what they please? Is'n't he an acquaintance that all your groanings and lamentations could never have got us?

Croak. He is a man of importance, I grant you. And yet, what amazes me is, that while he is giving away places to all the world, he can't get one for himself.

Mrs. C. That, perhaps, may be owing to his nicety. Great men are not easily satisfied.

Enter DUBARDIEU.

Dub. An expresse from Monsieur Lofty. He vil be vait upon your honour's instrammant. He be only giving four five instruction, read two tree memorial, call upon von ambassadeur. He vil be vid you in one tree minutes.

Mrs. C. You see now, my dear. What an extensive department! Well, friend, let your master know, that we are extremely honoured by this honour. Was there any thing ever in a higher stye of breeding!

All messages among the great are now done by express. [*Exit* DUBARDIEU.

Croaker. To be sure, no man does little things with more solemnity, or claims more respect than he. But he's in the right on't. In our bad world, respect is given, where respect is claimed.

Mrs. C. Never mind the world, my dear; you were never in a pleasanter place in your life. Let us now think of receiving him with proper respect [*a loud rapping at the door*] and there he is by the thundering rap.

Croak. Ay, verily, there he is! as close upon the heels of his own express, as an endorsement upon the back of a bill. Well, I'll leave you to receive him, whilst I go to chide my little Olivia for intending to steal a marriage without mine, or her aunt's consent. I must seem to be angry, or she, too, may begin to despise my authority. [*Exit.*

Enter LOFTY, *speaking to his* SERVANT.

Lofty. And if the Venetian ambassador, or that teasing creature the marquis, should call, I'm not at home. Dam'me, I'll be pack-horse to none of them. My dear madam, I have just snatched a moment—And if the expresses to his grace be ready, let them be sent off; they're of importance. Madam, I ask a thousand pardons.

Mrs. C. Sir, this honour——

Lofty. And, Dubardieu! if the person calls about the commission, let him know that it is made out. As for Lord Cumbercourt's stale request, it can keep cold;—you understand me. Madam, I ask ten thousand pardons.

Mrs. C. Sir, this honour——

Lofty. And, Dubardieu! if the man comes from the Cornish borough, you must do him—you must do him, I say. Madam, I ask ten thousand pardons. And if the Russian ambassador calls—but he will

scarce call to-day, I believe. And now, madam, I have just got time to express my happiness, in having the honour of being permitted to profess myself your most obedient humble servant.

Mrs. C. Sir, the happiness and honour are all mine; and yet, I'm only robbing the public, while I detain you.

Lofty. Sink the public, madam, when the fair are to be attended! Ah, could all my hours be so charmingly devoted! sincerely, don't you pity us poor creatures in affairs? Thus it is eternally; solicited for places here, teased for pensions there, and courted every where. I know you pity me. Yes, I see you do.

Mrs. C. Excuse me, sir. Toils of empires pleasures are, as Waller says.

Lofty. Waller, Waller: is he of the house?

Mrs. C. The modern poet of that name, sir.

Lofty. Oh, a modern! We men of business despise the moderns; and as for the ancients, we have no time to read them. Poetry is a pretty thing enough for our wives and daughters; but not for us. Why now, here I stand, that know nothing of books. I say, madam, I know nothing of books; and yet, I believe, upon a land-carriage fishery, a stamp act, or a jaghire, I can talk my two hours without feeling the want of them.

Mrs. C. The world is no stranger to Mr. Lofty's eminence in every capacity.

Lofty. I vow to gad, madam, you make me blush. I'm nothing, nothing, nothing in the world; a mere obscure gentleman. To be sure, indeed, one or two of the present ministers are pleased to represent me as a formidable man. I know they are pleased to bespatter me at all their little dirty levees. Yet, upon my soul, I wonder what they see in me to treat me so! Measures, not men, have always been my mark; and I vow by all that's honourable, my re-

sentment has never done the men, as mere men, any manner of harm—That is, as mere men.

Mrs. C. What importance, and yet, what modesty!

Lofty. Oh, if you talk of modesty, madam! There, I own, I'm accessible to praise: modesty is my foible. It was so, the duke of Brentford used to say of me.—I love Jack Lofty, he used to say—no man has a finer knowledge of things—quite a man of information: and when he speaks upon his legs, by the lord he's prodigious—he scouts them; and yet all men have their faults; too much modesty is his, says his grace.

Mrs. C. And yet, I dare say, you don't want assurance, when you come to solicit for your friends.

Lofty. O, there, indeed, I'm in bronze. Apropos: I have just been mentioning Miss Richland's case to a certain personage; we must name no names. When I ask, I am not to be put off, madam. No, no, I take my friend by the button.—A fine girl, sir;—great justice in her case—A friend of mine—Borough interest.—Business must be done, Mr. Secretary.—I say, Mr. Secretary, her business must be done, sir.—That's my way, madam.

Mrs. C. Bless me! you said all this to the Secretary of State, did you?

Lofty. I did not say the Secretary, did I? Well, curse it, since you have found me out, I will not deny it. It was to the Secretary.

Mrs. C. This was going to the fountain head at once, not applying to the understrappers, as Mr. Honeywood would have had us.

Lofty. Honeywood! he! he! He was indeed a fine solicitor. I suppose you have heard what has just happened to him?

Mrs. C. Poor dear man! no accident, I hope?

Lofty. Undone, madam, that's all. His creditors have taken him into custody.—A prisoner in his own house.

Mrs. C. A prisoner in his own house! How! At this very time! I'm quite unhappy for him.

Lofty. Why, so am I. The man, to be sure, was immensely goodnatured: But then, I could never find that he had any thing in him.

Mrs. C. His manner, to be sure, was excessive harmless; some, indeed, thought it a little dull. For my part, I always concealed my opinion.

Lofty. It can't be concealed, madam; the man was dull—dull as the last new comedy!—A poor impracticable creature! I tried once or twice, to know if he was fit for business; but he had scarce talents to be groom-porter to an orange barrow.

Mrs. C. How differently does Miss Richland think of him! for, I believe, with all his faults, she loves him.

Lofty. Loves him! Does she? You should cure her of that, by all means. Let me see, what if she were sent to him this instant, in his present doleful situation? My life for it, that works her cure! Distress is a perfect antidote to love. Suppose we join her in the next room? Miss Richland is a fine girl—has a fine fortune, and must not be thrown away. Upon my honour, madam, I have a regard for Miss Richland; and, rather than she should be thrown away, I should think it no indignity to marry her myself. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Another Apartment.

Enter OLIVIA *and* LEONTINE.

Leon. And yet, trust me, Olivia, I had every reason to expect Miss Richland's refusal, as I did every

thing in my power to deserve it. Her indelicacy surprises me!

Olivia. Sure, Leontine, there's nothing so indelicate in being sensible of your merit. If so, I fear I shall be the most guilty thing alive.

Leon. But you mistake, my dear. The same attention I used to advance my merit with you, I practised, to lessen it with her. What more could I do?

Olivia. Let us now rather consider what's to be done. We have both dissembled too long—I have always been ashamed—I am now quite weary of it. Sure I could never have undergone so much for any other but you.

Leon. And you shall find my gratitude equal to your kindest compliance. Though our friends should totally forsake us, Olivia, we can draw upon content for the deficiencies of fortune.

Olivia. Then why should we defer our scheme of humble happiness, when it is now in our power? I may be the favourite of your father, it is true; but can it ever be thought, that his present kindness to a supposed child, will continue to a known deceiver?

Leon. I have many reasons to believe it will. As his attachments are but few, they are lasting. His own marriage was a private one, as ours may be. Besides, I have sounded him already at a distance, and find all his answers exactly to our wish. Nay, by an expression or two that dropped from him, I am induced to think he knows of this affair.

Olivia. Indeed! But that would be a happiness too great to be expected.

Leon. However it be, I'm certain you have power over him; and am persuaded, if you informed him of our situation, that he would be disposed to pardon it.

Olivia. You had equal expectations, Leontine, from your last scheme with Miss Richland, which you find has succeeded most wretchedly.

Leon. And that's the best reason for trying another,

Olivia. If it must be so, I submit.

Leon. As we could wish, he comes this way. Now, my dearest Olivia, be resolute. I'll just retire within hearing, to come in at a proper time, either to share your danger, or confirm your victory. [*Exit.*

Enter CROAKER.

Croak. Yes, I must forgive her; and yet not too easily neither. It will be proper to keep up the decorums of resentment a little, if it be only to impress her with an idea of my authority.

Olivia. How I tremble to approach him!—Might I presume, sir—If I interrupt you——

Croak. No, child, where I have an affection, it is not a little thing can interrupt me. Affection gets over little things.

Olivia. Sir, you're too kind. I'm sensible how ill I deserve this partiality. Yet, Heaven knows, there is nothing I would not do to gain it.

Croak. And you have but too well succeeded, you little hussy, you. With those endearing ways of yours, on my conscience, I could be brought to forgive any thing, unless it were a very great offence indeed.

Olivia. But mine is such an offence—When you know my guilt—Yes, you shall know it, though I feel the greatest pain in the confession.

Croak. Why, then, if it be so very great a pain, you may spare yourself the trouble, for I know every syllable of the matter before you begin.

Olivia. Indeed! Then I'm undone.

Croak. Ay, miss, you wanted to steal a match; without letting me know it, did you? But I'm not worth being consulted, I suppose, when there's to be a marriage in my own family. No, I'm to have no hand in the disposal of my own children.—No, I'm nobody.—I'm to be a mere article of family dumber

—a piece of cracked china, to be stuck up in a corner.

Olivia. Dear sir, nothing but the dread of your authority could induce us to conceal it from you.

Croak. No, no, my consequence is no more; I'm as little minded as a dead Russian in winter, just stuck up with a pipe in his mouth, till there comes a thaw.—It goes to my heart to vex her.

Olivia. I was prepared, sir, for your anger, and despaired of pardon, even while I presumed to ask it. But your severity shall never abate my affection, as my punishment is but justice.

Croak. And yet, you should not despair, neither, Livy. We ought to hope all for the best.

Olivia. And do you permit me to hope, sir? Can I ever expect to be forgiven? But hope has too long deceived me.

Croak. Why, then, child, it sha'n't deceive you now, for I forgive you this very moment. I forgive you all; and now you are indeed my daughter.

Olivia. O transport! This kindness overpowers me.

Croak. I was always against severity to our children. We have been young and giddy ourselves, and we can't expect boys and girls to be old before their time.

Olivia. What generosity! But can you forget the many falsehoods, the dissimulation——

Croak. You did indeed dissemble, you urchin, you; but where's the girl that won't dissemble for a husband! My wife and I had never been married, if we had not dissembled a little before-hand.

Olivia. It shall be my future care never to put such generosity to a second trial. And, as for the partner of my offence and folly, from his native honour, and the just sense he has of his duty, I can answer for him that——

Enter LEONTINE.

Leon. Permit him, thus, to answer for himself. [*Kneeling.*] Thus, sir, let me speak my gratitude for this unmerited forgiveness. Yes, sir, this even exceeds all your former tenderness: I now can boast the most indulgent of fathers. The life he gave, compared to this, was but a trifling blessing.

Croak. And, good sir, who sent for you, with that fine tragedy face, and flourishing manner? I don't know what we have to do with your gratitude upon this occasion.

Leon. How, sir, is it possible to be silent when so much obliged! Would you refuse me the pleasure of being grateful! of adding my thanks to my Olivia's! Of sharing in the transports that you have thus occasioned!

Croak. Lord, sir, we can be happy enough, without your coming in to make up the party. I don't know what's the matter with the boy all this day; he has got into such a rhodomontade manner all the morning!

Leon. But, sir, I that have so large a part in the benefit, is it not my duty to show my joy? Is the being admitted to your favour so slight an obligation? Is the happiness of marrying my Olivia so small a blessing?

Croak. Marrying Olivia! marrying Olivia! marrying his own sister! Sure the boy is out of his senses. His own sister!

Leon. My sister!

Olivia. Sister! How have I been mistaken! [*Aside.*

Leon. Some cursed mistake in all this, I find. [*Aside.*

Croak. What does the booby mean? or has he any meaning? Eh, what do you mean, you blockhead, you?

Leon. Mean, sir—why, sir—only when my sister

is to be married, that I have the pleasure of marrying her, sir; that is, of giving her away, sir——I have made a point of it.

Croak. O, is that all? Give her away You have made a point of it. Then you had as good make a point of first giving away yourself as I'm going to prepare the writings between you and Miss Richland this very minute. What a fuss is here about nothing! Why, what's the matter now? I thought I had made you at least as happy as you could wish.

Olivia. O! yes, sir, very happy.

Croak. Do you foresee any thing, child? You look as if you did. I think if any thing was to be foreseen, I have as sharp a look-out as another: and yet, I foresee nothing. [*Exit.*

Olivia. What can it mean?

Leon. He knows something, and yet for my life I can't tell what.

Olivia. It can't be the connexion between us, I'm pretty certain.

Leon. Whatever it be, my dearest, I'm resolved to put it out of fortune's power to repeat our mortification. I'll haste, and prepare for our journey to Scotland this very evening. My friend Honeywood has promised me his advice and assistance. I'll go to him, and repose our distresses on his friendly bosom: and I know so much of his honest heart, that if he can't relieve our uneasinesses, he will at least share them. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

Young HONEYWOOD'S *House.*

BAILIFF, HONEYWOOD, *and* FLANIGAN

Bailiff. Lookyé, sir, I have arrested as good men as you in my time: no disparagement of you neither. Men that would go forty guineas on a game of cribbage. I challenge the town to show a man in more genteeler practice than myself.

Mr. H. Without all question, Mr. ——. I forget your name, sir?

Bailiff. How can you forget what you never knew? He! he! he!

Mr. H. May I beg leave to ask your name?

Bailiff. Yes, you may.

Mr. H. Then, pray, sir, what is your name, sir?

Bailiff. That I didn't promise to tell you. He! he! he! A joke breaks no bones, as we say among us that practise the law.

Mr. H. You may have reason for keeping it a secret, perhaps.

Bailiff. The law does nothing without reason. I'm ashamed to tell my name to no man, sir. If you can show cause, as why, upon a special capus, that I should prove my name——But, come, Timothy Twitch is my name. And, now you know my name, what have you to say to that?

Mr. H. Nothing in the world, good Mr. Twitch, but that I have a favour to ask, that's all.

Bailiff. Ay, favours are more easily asked than

granted, as we say among us that practise the law. I have taken an oath against granting favours. Would you have me perjure myself?

Mr. H. But my request will come recommended in so strong a manner, as, I believe, you'll have no scruple. [*Pulling out his Purse.*] The thing is only this: I believe I shall be able to discharge this trifle in two or three days at farthest; but, as I would not have the affair known for the world, I have thoughts of keeping you, and your good friend here, about me till the debt is discharged; for which, I shall be properly grateful.

Bailiff. Oh! that's another maxum, and altogether within my oath. For certain, if an honest man is to get any thing by a thing, there's no reason why all things should not be done in civility.

Mr. H. Doubtless, all trades must live, Mr. Twitch; and yours is a necessary one.

[*Gives him Money.*

Bailiff. Oh! your honour; I hope your honour takes nothing amiss as I does, as I does nothing but my duty in so doing. I'm sure no man can say I ever give a gentleman that was a gentleman ill usage. If I saw that a gentleman was a gentleman, I have taken money not to see him for ten weeks together.

Mr. H. Tenderness is a virtue, Mr. Twitch.

Bailiff. Ay, sir, it's a perfect treasure. I love to see a gentleman with a tender heart. I don't know, but I think I have a tender heart myself. If all that I have lost by my heart was put together, it would make a—but no matter for that.

Mr. H. Don't account it lost, Mr. Twitch. The ingratitude of the world can never deprive us of the conscious happiness of having acted with humanity ourselves.

Bailiff. Humanity, sir, is a jewel. It's better than gold. I love humanity. People may say, that we, in our way, have no humanity; but I'll show you

my humanity this moment. There's my follower here, little Flanigan, with a wife and four children, a guinea or two would be more to him than twice as much to another. Now, as I can't show him any humanity myself, I must beg leave you'll do it for me.

Mr. H. I assure you, Mr. Twitch, yours is a most powerful recommendation.

[*Giving Money to the Follower.*

Bailiff. Sir, you're a gentleman. I see, you know what to do with your money. But to business: we are to be with you here as your friends, I suppose. But set in case company comes.—Little Flanigan here, to be sure, has a good face—a very good face: but, then, he is a little seedy, as we say among us that practise the law.—Not well in clothes.—Smoke the pocket holes.

Mr. H. Well, that shall be remedied without delay.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, Miss Richland is below.

Mr. H. How unlucky!—Detain her a moment. We must improve, my good friend, little Mr. Flanigan's appearance first. Here, let Mr. Flanigan have a suit of my clothes—quick—the brown and silver—Do you hear?

Serv. That your honour gave away to the begging gentleman, that makes verses, because it was as good as new.

Mr. H. The white and gold then.

Serv. That, your honour, I made bold to sell, because it was good for nothing.

Mr. H. Well, the first that comes to hand then. The blue and gold. I believe Mr. Flanigan will look best in blue. [*Exit* FLANIGAN.

Bailiff. Rabbit me, but little Flanigan will look well in any thing. Ah, if your honour knew that bit

of flesh as well as I do, you'd be perfectly in love with him. There's not a prettier scout in the four counties after a shycock than he. Scents like a hound; sticks like a weasel. He was master of the ceremonies to the black queen of Morocco when I took him to follow me.

Enter FLANIGAN.

Heh! ecod, I think he looks so well, that I don't care if I have a suit from the same place for myself.

Mr. H. Well, well, I hear the lady coming. Dear Mr. Twitch, I beg you'll give your friend directions not to speak. As for yourself, I know you will say nothing without being directed.

Bailiff. Never you fear me; I'll show the lady that I have something to say for myself as well as another. One man has one way of talking, and another man has another, that's all the difference between them.

Enter MISS RICHLAND *and* GARNET.

Miss R. You'll be surprised, sir, with this visit. But you know I'm yet to thank you for chusing my little library.

Mr. H. Thanks, madam, are unnecessary, as it was I that was obliged by your commands. Chairs here. Two of my very good friends, Mr. Twitch and Mr. Flanigan. Pray, gentlemen, sit without ceremony.

Miss R. Who can these odd looking men be! I fear it is as I was informed. It must be so. [*Aside.*

Bailiff. [*After a Pause.*] Pretty weather, very pretty weather, for the time of the year, madam.

Flan. Very good circuit weather in the country.

Mr. H. You officers are generally favourites among the ladies. My friends, madam, have been upon very disagreeable duty, I assure you. The fair

should, in some measure, recompense the toil of the brave.

Miss R. Our officers do indeed deserve every favour. The gentlemen are in the marine service, I presume, sir?

Mr. H. Why, madam, they do—occasionally serve in the Fleet, madam. A dangerous service.

Miss R. I'm told so. And I own, it has often surprised me, that, while we have had so many instances of bravery there, we have had so few of wit at home to praise it.

Mr. H. I grant, madam, that our poets have not written as our soldiers have fought; but, they have done all they could, and Hawke or Amherst could do no more.

Miss R. I'm quite displeased when I see a fine subject spoiled by a dull writer.

Mr. H. We should not be so severe against dull writers, madam. It is ten to one but the dullest writer exceeds the most rigid French critic who presumes to despise him.

Flan. Damn the French, the parle vous, and all that belongs to them.

Miss R. Sir!

Mr. H. Ha! ha! ha! honest Mr. Flanigan. A true English officer, madam; he's not contented with beating the French, but he will scold them too.

Miss R. Yet, Mr. Honeywood, this does not convince me but that severity in criticisms is necessary. It was our first adopting the severity of French taste, that has brought them in turn to taste us.

Bailiff. Taste us! By the lord, madam, they devour us. Give Monseers but a taste, and I'll be damned but they come in for a bellyfull.

Miss R. Very extraordinary this.

Flan. But very true. What makes the bread rising? the parle vous that devour us. What makes the mutton a shilling a pound? the parle vous that

eat it up. What makes the beer fivepence a pot——

Mr. H. Ah! the vulgar rogues! all will be out. [illegible]ht, gentlemen, very right, upon my word, and quite to the purpose. They draw a parallel, madam, between the mental taste and that of our senses. We are injured as much by French severity in the one, as by French rapacity in the other. That's their meaning.

Miss R. Though I don't see the force of the parallel, yet I'll own that we should sometimes pardon books, as we do our friends, that have now and then agreeable absurdities to commend them.

Bailiff. That's all my eye. The king only can pardon, as the law says: for set in case——

Mr. H. I'm quite of your opinion, sir. I see the whole drift of your argument. Yes, certainly, our presuming to pardon any work is arrogating a power that belongs to another. If all have power to condemn, what writer can be free?

Bailiff. By his habus corpus. His habus corpus can set him free at any time. For set in case——

Mr. H. I'm obliged to you, sir, for the hint. If, madam, as my friend observes, our laws are so careful of a gentleman's person, sure we ought to be equally careful of his dearer part, his fame.

Flan. Ay, but if so be a man's nabbed, you know——

Mr. H. Mr. Flanigan, if you spoke for ever, you could not improve the last observation. For my own part, I think it conclusive.

Bailiff. As for the matter of that, mayhap——

Mr. H. Nay, sir, give me leave in this instance to be positive. For where is the necessity of censuring works without genius, which must shortly sink of themselves? what is it, but aiming our unnecessary blow against a victim already under the hands of justice?

Bailiff. Justice! O, by the elevens, if you talk about justice, I think I am at home there; for, in a course of law——

Mr. H. My dear Mr. Twitch, I discern you'd be at perfectly, and I believe the lady must be sensible of the art with which it is introduced. I suppose you perceive the meaning, madam, of his course of law.

Miss R. I protest, sir, I do not. I perceive only that you answer one gentleman before he has finished, and the other before he has well begun.

Bailiff. Madam, you are a gentlewoman, and I will make the matter out. This here question is about severity, and justice, and pardon, and the like of they. Now to explain the thing——

Mr. H. O! curse your explanations! [*Aside.*

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Leontine, sir, below, desires to speak with you upon earnest business.

Mr. H. That's lucky. [*Aside.*] Dear madam, you'll excuse me, and my good friends here, for a few minutes. There are books, madam, to amuse you. Come, gentlemen, you know I make no ceremony with such friends. After you, sir. Excuse me. Well, if I must. But, I know your natural politeness.

Bailiff. Before and behind, you know.

Flan. Ay, ay, before and behind, before and behind.

[*Exeunt* HONEYWOOD, BAILIFF, *and* FLANIGAN.

Miss R. What can all this mean, Garnet?

Gar. Mean, madam! why, what should it mean, but what Mr. Lofty sent you here to see? These people he calls officers, are officers sure enough: sheriff's officers; bailiffs, madam.

Miss R. Ay, it is certainly so. Well, though his perplexities are far from giving me pleasure; yet, I

own there's something very ridiculous in them, and a just punishment for his dissimulation.

Gar. And so they are. But I wonder, madam, that the lawyer you just employed to pay his debts, and set him free, has not done it by this time. He ought at least to have been here before now. But lawyers are always more ready to get a man into troubles, than out of them.

Enter SIR WILLIAM.

Sir W. For Miss Richland to undertake setting him free, I own, was quite unexpected. It has totally unhinged my schemes to reclaim him. Yet, it gives me pleasure to find, that, among a number of worthless friendships, he has made one acquisition of real value; for there must be some softer passion on her side that promotes this generosity. Ha! here before me: I'll endeavour to sound her affections. Madam, as I am the person that have had some demands upon the gentleman of this house, I hope you'll excuse me, if before I enlarged him, I wanted to see yourself.

Miss R. The precaution was very unnecessary, sir. I suppose your wants were only such as my agent had power to satisfy.

Sir W. Partly, madam. But I was also willing you should be fully apprised of the character of the gentleman you intended to serve.

Miss R. It must come, sir, with a very ill grace from you. To censure it, after what you have done, would look like malice; and to speak favourably of a character you have oppressed, would be impeaching your own. And sure, his tenderness, his humanity, his universal friendship, may atone for many faults.

Sir W. That friendship, madam, which is exerted in too wide a sphere, becomes totally useless. Our bounty, like a drop of water, disappears when diffused too widely. They, who pretend most to this

universal benevolence, are either deceivers, or dupes. Men who desire to cover their private ill-nature, by a pretended regard for all; or, men who, reasoning themselves into false feelings, are more earnest in pursuit of splendid than of useful virtues.

Miss R. I am surprised, sir, to hear one who has probably been a gainer by the folly of others so severe in his censure of it.

Sir W. Whatever I may have gained by folly, madam, you see I am willing to prevent your losing by it.

Miss R. Your cares for me, sir, are unnecessary. I always suspect those services which are denied where they are wanted, and offered, perhaps, in hopes of a refusal. No, sir, my directions have been given, and I insist upon their being complied with.

Sir W. Thou amiable woman! I can no longer contain the expressions of my gratitude—my pleasure. You see before you one who has been equally careful of his interest: one who has for some time been a concealed spectator of his follies, and only punished, in hopes to reclaim them—His uncle.

Miss R. Sir William Honeywood! You amaze me. How shall I conceal my confusion! I fear, sir, you'll think I have been too forward in my services. I confess I——

Sir W. Don't make any apologies, madam. I only find myself unable to repay the obligation. And yet, I have been trying my interest of late to serve you. Having learnt, madam, that you had some demands upon government, I have, though unasked, been your solicitor there.

Miss R. Sir, I'm infinitely obliged to you for intentions. But my guardian has employed another gentleman, who assures him of success.

Sir W. Who, the important little man that visits here! Trust me, madam, he's quite contemptible among men in power, and utterly unable to serve

day. Why, as thus, now: let me suppose you first lord of the treasury, you have an employment in you that I want; I have a place in me that you want; do me here, do you there; interest of both sides, few words, flat, done and done, and it's over.

Sir W. A thought strikes me. [*Aside.*] Now you mention Sir William Honeywood, madam; and as he seems, sir, an acquaintance of yours; you'll be glad to hear he's arrived from Italy; I had it from a friend who knows him as well as he does me, and you may depend on my information.

Lofty. The devil he is! If I had known that, we should not have been quite so well acquainted.—— [*Aside.*

Sir W. He is certainly returned; and as this gentleman is a friend of yours, he can be of signal service to us, by introducing me to him; there are some papers relative to your affairs, that require despatch and his inspection.

Miss R. This gentleman, Mr. Lofty, is a person employed in my affairs: I know you'll serve us.

Lofty. My dear madam, I live but to serve you. Sir William shall even wait upon him, if you think proper to command it.

Sir W. That would be quite unnecessary.

Lofty. Well, we must introduce you then. Call upon me—let me see—ay, in two days.

Sir W. Now, or the opportunity will be lost for ever.

Lofty. Well, if it must be now, now let it be. But, damn it, that's unfortunate; my Lord Grig's cursed Pensacola business comes on this very hour, and I'm engaged to attend—another time——

Sir W. A short letter to Sir William will do.

Lofty. You shall have it; yet, in my opinion, a letter is a very bad way of going to work; face to face, that's my way.

Sir W. The letter, sir, will do quite as well.

Lofty. Zounds, sir, do you pretend to direct me? direct me in the business of office? Do you know me, sir? Who am I?

Miss R. Dear Mr. Lofty, this request is not so much his as mine; if my commands—but you despise my power.

Lofty. Delicate creature! your commands could even control a debate at midnight; to a power so constitutional, I am all obedience and tranquillity.—He shall have a letter; Where is my secretary? Dubardieu! And yet, I protest I don't like this way of doing business. I think if I spoke first to Sir William —But you will have it so.

[*Exit with* MISS RICHLAND.

Sir W. Ha! ha! ha! This too is one of my nephew's hopeful associates. O vanity, thou constant deceiver, how do all thy efforts to exalt serve but to sink us! Thy false colourings, like those employed to heighten beauty, only seem to mend that bloom which they contribute to destroy. I'm not displeased at this interview; exposing this fellow's impudence to the contempt it deserves may be of use to my design; at least, if he can reflect, it will be of use to himself.

Enter JARVIS.

How now, Jarvis, where's your master, my nephew?

Jarvis. At his wit's end, I believe; he's scarce got out of one scrape, but he's running his head into another.

Sir W. How so?

Jarvis. The house has but just been cleared of the bailiffs, and now he's again engaging tooth and nail in assisting old Croaker's son to patch up a clandestine match with the young lady that passes in the house for his sister.

Sir W. Ever busy to serve others.

Jarvis. Ay, any body but himself. The young

dawple, it seems, are just setting out for Scotland, and he supplies them with money for the journey.

Sir W. Money! how is he able to supply others, who has scarce any for himself?

Jarvis. Why, there it is; he has no money, that's true; but then, as he never said no to any request in his life, he has given them a bill drawn by a friend of his upon a merchant in the city, which I am to get changed; for you must know that I am to go with them to Scotland myself.

Sir W. How!

Jarvis. It seems the young gentleman is obliged to take a different road from his mistress, as he is to call upon an uncle of his that lives out of the way, in order to prepare a place for their reception, when they return; so they have borrowed me from my master, as the properest person to attend the young lady down.

Sir W. To the land of matrimony! A pleasant journey, Jarvis.

Jarvis. Ay, but I'm only to have all the fatigues on't.

Sir W. Well, it may be shorter, and less fatiguing, than you imagine. I know but too much of the young lady's family and connexions, whom I have seen abroad. I have also discovered that Miss Richland is not indifferent to my thoughtless nephew; and will endeavour, though, I fear, in vain, to establish that connexion. But, come, the letter I wait for must be almost finished; I'll let you further into my intentions, in the next room. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

CROAKER'S *House.*

Enter LOFTY.

Lofty. Well, sure the devil's in me of late, for running my head into such defiles, as nothing but a genius like my own could draw me from. I was formerly contented to husband out my places and pensions with some degree of frugality; but, curse it, of late, I have given away the whole Court Register in less time than they could print the title page; yet, hang it, why scruple a lie or two, to come at a fine girl, when I every day tell a thousand for nothing? Ha! Honeywood here before me. Could Miss Richland have set him at liberty?

Enter HONEYWOOD.

Mr. Honeywood, I'm glad to see you abroad again. I find my concurrence was not necessary in your unfortunate affairs. I had put things in a train to do your business; but it is not for me to say what I intended doing.

Mr. H. It was unfortunate indeed, sir. But what adds to my uneasiness, is, that while you seem to be acquainted with my misfortune, I, myself, continue still a stranger to my benefactor.

Lofty. How! not know the friend that served you?

Mr. H. Can't guess at the person.

Lofty. Inquire.

Mr. H. I have, but all I can learn, is, that he

chuses to remain concealed, and that all inquiry must be fruitless.

Lofty. Must be fruitless?

Mr. H. Absolutely fruitless.

Lofty. Sure of that?

Mr. H. Very sure.

Lofty. Then I'll be damned if you shall ever know it from me.

Mr. H. How, sir?

Lofty. I suppose, now, Mr. Honeywood, you think my rent-roll very considerable, and that I have vast sums of money to throw away;—I know you do.—The world, to be sure, says such things of me.

Mr. H. The world, by what I learn, is no stranger to your generosity. But where does this tend?

Lofty. To nothing · nothing in the world. The town, to be sure when it makes such a thing as me the subject of conversation, has asserted, that I never yet patronized a man of merit.

Mr. H. I have heard instances to the contrary, even from yourself.

Lofty. Yes, Honeywood, and there are instances to the contrary, that you shall never hear from myself.

Mr. H. Ha, dear sir, permit me to ask you but one question.

Lofty Sir, ask me no questions;—I say, sir, ask me no questions—I'll be damned if I answer them.

Mr. H. I will ask no further. My friend, my benefactor, it is, it must be here, that I am indebted for freedom—for honour. Yes, thou worthiest of men, from the beginning I suspected it, but was afraid to return thanks; which, if undeserved, might seem reproaches.

Lofty. I protest, I don't understand all this, Mr. Honeywood You treat me very cavalierly. I do assure you, sir,—Blood, sir! can't a man be permitted

to enjoy the luxury of his own feelings, without all this parade?

Mr. H. Nay, do not attempt to conceal an action that adds to your honour. Your looks, your air, your manner, all confess it.

Lofty. Confess it, sir! Torture itself, sir, shall never bring me to confess it. Mr. Honeywood, I have admitted you upon terms of friendship—Don't let us fall out; make me happy, and let this be buried in oblivion. You know I hate ostentation—you know I do. Come, come, Honeywood, you know I always lov'd to be a friend, and not a patron. I beg this may make no kind of distance between us. Come, come, you and I must be more familiar—indeed we must.

Mr. H. Heavens! Can I ever repay such friendship? Is there any way?—Thou best of men, can I ever return the obligation?

Lofty. A bagatelle, a mere bagatelle.—But I see your heart is labouring to be grateful.—You shall be grateful.—It would be cruel to disappoint you.

Mr. H. How? Teach me the manner.—Is there any way?

Lofty. From this moment you are mine. Yes, my friend, you shall know it—I'm in love.

Mr. H. And can I assist you?

Lofty. Nobody so well.

Mr. H. In what manner?—I'm all impatience.

Lofty. You shall make love for me.

Mr. H. And to whom shall I speak in your favour?

Lofty. To a lady with whom you have great interest, I assure you.—Miss Richland.

Mr. H. Miss Richland!

Lofty. Yes, Miss Richland. She has struck the blow up to the hilt in my bosom, by Jupiter.

Mr. H. Heavens! was ever any thing more unfortunate!—It is too much to be endured!

Lofty. Unfortunate indeed! And yet I can endure it, till you have opened the affair to her, for me. Between ourselves, I think she likes me. I'm not apt to boast, but I think she does.

Mr. H. Indeed! But do you know the person you apply to?

Lofty. Yes, I know you are her friend and mine —that's enough. To you, therefore, I commit the success of my passion.—I'll say no more, let friendship do the rest. I have only to add, that if, at any time, my interest can be of service——but hang it, I'll make no promises; you know my interest is yours at any time.—No apologies, my friend, I'll not be answered—It shall be so. [*Exit.*

Mr. H. Open, generous, unsuspecting man! He little thinks that I love her too; and with such an ardent passion!—But then, it was ever but a vain and hopeless one—my torment, my persecution! What shall I do?—Love, friendship, a hopeless passion, a deserving friend!—Love, that has been my tormentor; a friend, that has, perhaps, distressed himself to serve me. It shall be so.—Yes, I will discard the fondling hope from my bosom, and exert all my influence in his favour. And yet to see her in the possession of another!—Insupportable. But then to betray a generous, trusting friend!—Worse, worse.—Yes, I'm resolved. Let me but be the instrument of their happiness, and then quit a country, where I must for ever despair of finding my own.

[*Exit.*

Enter OLIVIA *and* GARNET, *who carries a Milliner's Box.*

Olivia. Dear me, I wish this journey were over. No news of Jarvis, yet? I believe the old peevish creature delays purely to vex me.

Gar. Why, to be sure, madam, I did hear him say,

a little snubbing before marriage would teach you to bear it the better afterwards.

Olivia. To be gone a full hour, though he had only to get a bill changed in the city! How provoking!

Gar. I'll lay my life, Mr. Leontine, that had twice as much to do, is setting off by this time, from his inn; and here you are left behind!

Olivia. Well, let us be prepared for his coming, however.—Are you sure you have omitted nothing, Garnet?

Gar. Not a stick, madam—all's here.—Yet I wish you could take the white and silver to be married in. —It's the worst luck in the world in any thing but white.—I knew one Bett Stubbs, of our town, that was married in red; and, as sure as eggs is eggs, the bridegroom and she had a miff before morning.

Olivia. No matter.—I'm all impatience till we are out of the house.

Gar. Bless me, madam, I had almost forgot the wedding-ring!—The sweet little thing!—I don't think it would go on my little finger. And what if I put in a gentleman's night-cap, in case of necessity, madam? But here's Jarvis.

Enter JARVIS.

Olivia. O Jarvis! are you come at last? We have been ready this half hour. Now let's be going—Let us fly.

Jarvis. Ay, to Jericho; for we shall have no going to Scotland this bout, I fancy.

Olivia. How! What's the matter?

Jarvis. Money, money is the matter, madam. We have got no money. What the plague do you send me of your fool's errand for? My master's bill upon the city is not worth a rush—Here it is—Mrs. Garnet may pin up her hair with it.

Olivia. Undone! How could Honeywood serve us so?—What shall we do!—Can't we go without it?

Jarvis. Go to Scotland without money!—To Scotland without money! Lord, how some people understand geography! We might as well set sail for Patagonia upon a cork-jacket.

Olivia. Such a disappointment! What a base insincere man was your master, to serve us in this manner! Is this his good-nature?

Jarvis. Nay, don't talk ill of my master, madam. I won't bear to hear any body talk ill of him but myself.

Gar. Bless us! now I think on't, madam, you need not be under any uneasiness: I saw Mr. Leontine receive forty guineas from his father, just before he set out, and he can't yet have left the inn. A short letter will reach him there.

Olivia. Well remembered, Garnet;—I'll write immediately.—How's this?—Bless me, my hand trembles so, I can't write a word.—Do you write, Garnet; and, upon second thought, it will be better from you.

Gar. Truly, madam, I write and indite but poorly. I never was kute at my larning. But I'll do what I can to please you.—Let me see.—All out of my own head, I suppose?

Olivia. Whatever you please.

Gar. [Writing.] *Muster Croaker*—Twenty guineas, madam?

Olivia. Ay, twenty will do.

Gar. *At the bar of the Talbot till called for.—Expedition—Will be blown up—All of a flame—Quick, despatch—Cupid, the little god of love*—I conclude it, madam, with Cupid; I love to see a love-letter end like poetry.

Olivia. Well, well, what you please, any thing.

But how shall we send it? I can trust none of the servants of this family.

Gar. Odso, madam, Mr. Honeywood's butler is in the next room;—he's a dear sweet man!—he'll do any thing for me.

Jarvis. He! the dog—he'll certainly commit some blunder. He's drunk and sober ten times a day.

Olivia. No matter—Fly, Garnet; any body we can trust will do. [*Exit* GARNET.] Well, Jarvis, now we can have nothing more to interrupt us. You may take up the things, and carry them on to the inn. Have you no hands, Jarvis?

Jarvis. Soft and fair, young lady. You, that are going to be married, think things can never be done too fast: but we that are old, and know what we are about, must elope methodically, madam.

Olivia. Well, sure, if my indiscretions were to be done over again——

Jarvis. My life for it, you would do them ten times over.

Olivia. Why will you talk so? If you knew how unhappy they make me——

Jarvis. Very unhappy, no doubt: I was once just as unhappy when I was going to be married myself. I'll tell you a story about that——

Olivia. A story! when I'm all impatience to be away. Was there ever such a dilatory creature!—

Jarvis. Well, madam, if we must march, why we will march, that's all.—Though, odds bobs, we have still forgot one thing we should never travel without —a case of good razors, and a box of shaving-powder.—But no matter, I believe we shall be pretty well shaved by the way. [*Going*

Enter GARNET.

Gar. Undone, undone, madam. Ah, Mr. Jarvis,

you said right enough. As sure as death, Mr. Honeywood's rogue of a drunken butler dropped the letter before he went ten yards from the door. There's old Croaker has just picked it up, and is this moment reading it to himself in the hall.

Olivia. Unfortunate! we shall be discovered.

Car. No, madam, don't be uneasy, he can make neither head nor tail of it. To be sure, he looks as if he was broke loose from Bedlam about it, but he can't find what it means for all that. O lud, he is coming this way all in the horrors!

Olivia. Then let us leave the house this instant, for fear he should ask farther questions. In the mean time, Garnet, do you write and send off, just such another. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CROAKER.

Croak. Death and destruction! Are all the horrors of air, fire, and water, to be levelled only at me! Am I only to be singled out for gunpowder plots, combustibles, and conflagration!——Here it is—An incendiary letter dropped at my door. *To Mustur Croaker, these with speed.* Ay, ay, plain enough the direction; all in the genuine incendiary spelling, and as cramp as the devil. *With speed.* O, confound your speed. But let me read it once more. [*Reads.*] *Mustur Croakar, as sone as yoew see this leve twenty gunnes at the bar of the Talboot tell caled for or yowr and yowr experetion wil be al blown up.* Ah! but too plain. Blood and gunpowder in every line of it. Blown up!—murderous dogs!—All blown up!——Heavens! what have I and my poor family done, to be all blown up? [*Reads*]. *Our pockets are low, and money we must have.* Ay, there's the reason; they'll blow us up, because they have got low pockets.—[*Reads.*] *It is but a short time you have to consider; for if this takes wind, the house will quickly be all of a*

flame. Inhuman monsters! blow us up, and then burn us! The earthquake at Lisbon was but a bonfire to it. [*Reads.*] *Make quick despatch, and so no more at present. But may Cupid, the little god of love, go with you, wherever you go.* The little god of love! Cupid, the little god of love, go with me! Go you to the devil, you and your little Cupid together! I'm so frightened, I scarce know whether I sit, stand, or go. Perhaps this moment I'm treading on lighted matches, blazing brimstone, and barrels of gunpowder! They are preparing to blow me up into the clouds!—Murder! we shall be all burnt in our beds! We shall be all burnt in our beds!

Enter MISS RICHLAND.

Miss R. Lord, sir, what's the matter?

Croak. Murder's the matter—We shall be all blown up in our beds before morning.

Miss R. I hope not, sir.

Croak. What signifies what you hope, madam, when I have a certificate of it here in my hand.—Will nothing alarm my family? Sleeping and eating, sleeping and eating is the only work from morning till night in my house. My insensible crew could sleep though rocked by an earthquake; and fry beef steaks at a volcano.

Miss R. But, sir, you have alarmed them so often already! we have nothing but earthquakes, famines, plagues, and mad dogs, from year's end to year's end. You remember, sir, it is not above a month ago, you assured us of a conspiracy among the bakers to poison us in our bread; and so kept the whole family a week upon potatoes.

Croak. And potatoes were too good for them.—But why do I stand talking here with a girl, when I should be facing the enemy, without? Here, John, Nicodemus, search the house! Look into the cel-

lars, to see if there be any combustibles below; and above, in the apartments, that no matches be thrown in at the windows—Let all the fires be put out, and let the engine be drawn out in the yard, to play upon the house in case of necessity. [*Exit.*

Miss R. What can he mean by all this? Yet, why should I inquire, when he alarms us in this manner almost every day? But Honeywood has desired an interview with me in private. What can he mean? or, rather, what means this palpitation at his approach? It is the first time he ever showed any thing in his conduct that seemed particular. Sure he cannot mean to——but he's here.

Enter HONEYWOOD.

Mr. H. I presumed to solicit this interview, madam, before I left town, to be permitted——

Miss R. Indeed! leaving town, sir?

Mr. H. Yes, madam, perhaps the kingdom. I have presumed, I say, to desire the favour of this interview—in order to disclose something, which our long friendship prompts.—And yet my fears——

Miss R. His fears! What are his fears to mine? [*Aside.*] We have, indeed, been long acquainted, sir;—very long. If I remember, our first meeting was at the French ambassador's.—Do you recollect how you were pleased to rally me upon my complexion there?

Mr. H. Perfectly, madam; I presumed to reprove you for painting: but your warmer blushes soon convinced the company, that the colouring was all from nature.

Miss R. And yet, you only meant it in your goodnatured way, to make me pay a compliment to myself. In the same manner, you danced that night with the most awkward woman in company, because you saw no one else would take her out.

Mr. H. Yes; and was rewarded the next night by dancing with the finest woman in company, whom every body wished to take out.

Miss R. Well, sir, if you thought so then, I fear your judgment has since corrected the errors of a first impression. We generally show to most advantage at first. Our sex are like poor tradesmen, that put all their best goods to be seen at the windows.

Mr. H. The first impression, madam, did, indeed, deceive me. I expected to find a woman with all the faults of conscious, flattered beauty. I expected to find her vain and insolent; but every day has since taught me, that it is possible to possess sense without pride, and beauty without affectation.

Miss R. This, sir, is a style very unusual with Mr. Honeywood; and I should be glad to know why he thus attempts to increase that vanity, which his own lessons have taught me to despise.

Mr. H. I ask your pardon, madam; yet, from our long friendship, I presumed I might have some right to offer, without offence, what you may refuse without offending.

Miss R. Sir! I beg you'd reflect; though, I fear, I shall scarce have any power to refuse a request of yours, yet you may be precipitate—consider, sir.

Mr. H. I own my rashness; but, as I plead the cause of friendship of one who loves—Don't be alarmed, madam—Who loves you with the most ardent passion—whose whole happiness is placed in you—

Miss R. I fear, sir, I shall never find whom you mean, by this description of him.

Mr. H. Ah, madam, it but too plainly points him out! though he should be too humble himself to urge his pretensions, or you too modest to understand them.

Miss R. Well; it would be affectation any longer to pretend ignorance; and I will own, sir, I have

long been prejudiced in his favour. It was but natural to wish to make his heart mine, as he seemed himself ignorant of its value.

Mr. H. I see she always loved him. [*Aside.*] I find, madam, you're already sensible of his worth—his passion. How happy is my friend, to be the favourite of one, with such sense to distinguish merit, and such beauty to reward it.

Miss R. Your friend, sir! What friend?

Mr. H. My best friend,—My friend Mr. Lofty, madam.

Miss R. He, sir?

Mr. H. Yes, he, madam. He is, indeed, what your warmest wishes might have formed him. And to his other qualities he adds that of the most passionate regard for you.

Miss R. Amazement!—no more of this, I beg you, sir.

Mr. H. I see your confusion, madam, and know how to interpret it. And since I so plainly read the language of your heart, shall I make my friend happy, by communicating your sentiments?

Miss R. By no means.

Mr. H. Excuse me, I must: I know you desire it.

Miss R. Mr. Honeywood, let me tell you, that you wrong my sentiments, and yourself. When I first applied to your friendship, I expected advice and assistance; but now, sir, I see that it is vain to expect happiness from him, who has been so bad an œconomist of his own; and that I must disclaim his friendship, who ceases to be a friend to himself.

[*Exit.*

Mr. H. How is this! she has confessed she loved him, and yet she seemed to part in displeasure. Can I have done any thing to reproach myself with?—No, I believe not; yet, after all, these things should not be done by a third person; I should have spared

her confusion. My friendship carried me a little too far.

Enter CROAKER, *with the Letter in his Hand, and* MRS. CROAKER.

Mrs. C. Ha! ha! ha! And so, my dear, it's your supreme wish that I should be quite wretched upon this occasion? Ha! ha!

Croak. [*Mimicking.*] Ha! ha! ha! and so, my dear, it's your supreme pleasure to give me no better consolation?

Mrs. C. Positively, my dear, what is this incendiary stuff and trumpery to me? Our house may travel through the air, like the house of Loretto, for aught I care, if I'm to be miserable in it.

Croak. Would to Heaven it were converted into a house of correction for your benefit. Have we not every thing to alarm us? Perhaps, this very moment the tragedy is beginning.

Mrs. C. Then let us reserve our distress till the rising of the curtain, or give them the money they want, and have done with them.

Croak. Give them my money!—And pray, what right have they to my money?

Mrs. C. And pray, what right then have you to my good humour?

Croak. And so your good humour advises me to part with my money! Why, then, to tell your good humour a piece of my mind, I'd sooner part with my wife. Here's Mr. Honeywood, see what he'll say to it. My dear Honeywood, look at this incendiary letter dropped at my door. It will freeze you with terror; and yet lovey here can read it—can read it, and laugh.

Mrs. C. Yes, and so will Mr. Honeywood.

Croak. If he does, I'll suffer to be hanged the next minute in the rogue's place, that's all.

Mrs. C. Speak, Mr
think more foolish than
this occasion?

Mr. H. It would not becom
dam; but doubtless, the great
now, will but invite them to renew
other time.

Mrs. C. I told you he'd be of my opin

Croak. How, sir! do you maintain th
lie down under such an injury, and show, ne
my tears or complaints, that I have something
spirit of a man in me?

Mr. H. Pardon me, sir: You ought to make the loudest complaints, if you desire redress. The surest way to have redress, is to be earnest in the pursuit of it.

Croak. Then you think I'm in the right.

Mr. H. Yes.

Croak. Ay, whose opinion is he of now?

Mrs. C. But don't you think that laughing off our fears is the best way?

Mr. H. What is the best, madam, few can say; but I'll maintain it to be a very wise way.

Croak. But we're talking of the best. Surely, the best way is to face the enemy in the field, and not wait till he plunders us in our very bed-chamber.

Mr. H. Why, sir, as to the best, that—that's a very wise way too.

Mrs. C. But can any thing be more absurd than to double our distresses by our apprehensions, and put it in the power of every low fellow, that can scrawl ten words of wretched spelling, to torment us?

Mr. H. Without doubt, nothing more absurd.

Croak. How! would it not be more absurd to despise the rattle till we are bit by the snake?

Mr. H. Without doubt, perfectly absurd.

Croak. Then you are of my opinion?

t mine?

bid, madam. No, sure no
e just than yours. We ought,
se malice if we cannot oppose it,
e incendiary's pen as fatal to our re-
ghwayman's pistol.

O, then you think I'm quite right?

. Perfectly right.

k. A plague of plagues! we can't be both
t.——I ought to be sorry, or I ought to be glad.
—My hat must be on my head, or my hat must be off.

Mrs. C. Certainly, in two opposite opinions, if one be perfectly reasonable, the other can't be perfectly right.

Mr. H. And why may not both be right, madam? Mr. Croaker, in 'earnestly seeking redress, and you, in waiting the event in good humour? Pray let me see the letter again—I have it.—This letter requires twenty guineas to be left at the bar of the Talbot inn. If it be indeed an incendiary letter, what if you and I, sir, go there; and when the writer comes to be paid his expected booty, seize him.

Croak. My dear friend, it's the very thing—the very thing.—While I walk by the door, you shall plant yourself in ambush near the bar—burst out upon the miscreant like a masked battery—extort a confession at once, and so hang him up by surprise.

Mr. H. Yes—but I would not chuse to exercise too much severity. It is my maxim, sir, that crimes generally punish themselves.

Croak. Well, but we may upbraid him a little, I suppose? [*Ironically.*

Mr. H. Ay, but not punish him too rigidly.

Croak. Well, well, leave that to my own benevolence.

Mr. H. Well, I do; but remember, that universal benevolence is the first law of nature.

[*Exeunt* HONEYWOOD *and* MRS. CROAKER.

Croak. Yes—and my universal benevolence will hang the dog, if he had as many necks as a hydra.

[*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

An Inn.

Enter OLIVIA *and* JARVIS.

Olivia. Well, we have got safe to the inn, however. Now, if the post-chaise were ready ——

Jarvis. The horses are just finishing their oats; and, as they are not going to be married, they chuse to take their own time.

Olivia. You are for ever giving wrong motives to my impatience.

Jarvis. Be as impatient as you will, the horses must take their own time: besides, you don't consider, we have got no answer from our fellow traveller yet. If we hear nothing from Mr. Leontine, we have only one way left us.

Olivia. What way?

Jarvis. The way home again.

Olivia. Not so. I have made a resolution to go, and nothing shall induce me to break it.

Jarvis. Ay, resolutions are well kept, when they

jump with inclination. However, I'll go hasten things without. And I'll call too at the bar, to see if any thing should be left for us there. Don't be in such a plaguy hurry, madam, and we shall go the faster, I promise you. [*Exit* JARVIS.

Landlady. [*Without.*] What Solomon! why don't you move? Pipes and tobacco for the Lamb there.—Will nobody answer? To the Dolphin—quick. The Angel has been outrageous this half hour.

Enter LANDLADY.

Did your ladyship call, madam?

Olivia. No, madam.

Landl. I find as you're for Scotland, madam—But that's no business of mine: married or not married, I ask no questions. To be sure, we had a sweet little couple set off from this two days ago for the same place. The gentleman, for a tailor, was, to be sure, as fine a spoken tailor as ever blew froth from a full pot. And the young lady so bashful, it was near half an hour before we could get her to finish a pint of raspberry between us.

Olivia. But this gentleman and I are not going to be married, I assure you.

Landl. May be not. That's no business of mine; for certain, Scotch marriages seldom turn out well. There was, of my own knowledge, Miss Macfag, that married her father's footman.—Alack-a-day, she and her husband soon parted, and now keep separate cellars in Hedge-Lane.

Olivia. A very pretty picture of what lies before me! [*Aside.*

Enter LEONTINE.

Leon. My dear Olivia, my anxiety, till you were out of danger, was too great to be resisted. I could

help coming to see you set out, though it exposes to a discovery.

Olivia. May every thing you do prove as fortunate! Indeed, Leontine, we have been most cruelly disappointed. Mr. Honeywood's bill upon the city has, it seems, been protested, and we have been utterly at a loss how to proceed.

Leon. How! an offer of his own too. Sure, he could not mean to deceive us.

Olivia. Depend upon his sincerity; he only mistook the desire, for the power, of serving us. But let us think no more of it. I believe the post-chaise is ready by this.

Landl. Not quite yet: and, begging your ladyship's pardon, I don't think your ladyship quite ready for the post-chaise. The North road is a cold place, madam. I have a drop in the house of as pretty raspberry as ever was tipt over tongue. Just a thimblefull to keep the wind off your stomach. To be sure, the last couple we had here, they said it was a perfect nosegay. Ecod, I sent them both away as goodnatured—Up went the blinds, round went the wheels, and drive away, post-boy, was the word.

Enter CROAKER.

Croak. Well, while my friend Honeywood is upon the post of danger at the bar, it must be my business to have an eye about me here. I think I know an incendiary's look: for wherever the devil makes a purchase, he never fails to set his mark. Ha! who have we here? my son and daughter! What can they be doing here!

Landl. I tell you, madam, it will do you good; I think I know by this time what's good for the north road. It's a raw night, madam.—Sir—

Leon. Not a drop more, good madam. I sho now take it as a greater favour if you hasten horses for I am afraid to be seen myself.

Landl. That shall be done. What, Solomon! are you all dead there? What, Solomon, I say.

[*Exit bawling.*

Olivia. Well, I dread lest an expedition begun in fear should end in repentance.—Every moment we stay increases our danger, and adds to my apprehensions.

Leon. There's no danger, trust me, my dear; there can be none: if Honeywood has acted with honour, and kept my father, as he promised, in employment till we are out of danger, nothing can interrupt our journey.

Olivia. I have no doubt of Mr. Honeywood's sincerity, and even his desires to serve us. My fears are from your father's suspicions. A mind so disposed to be alarmed without a cause will be but too ready when there's a reason.

Leon. Why, let him, when we are out of his power. But, believe me, Olivia, you have no great reason to dread his resentment. His repining temper, as it does no manner of injury to himself, so will it never do harm to others. He only frets to keep himself employed, and scolds for his private amusement.

Olivia. I don't know that; but I'm sure, on some occasions, it makes him look most shockingly.

Croak. [*Discovering himself.*] How does he look now?—How does he look now?

Olivia. Ah!

Leon. Undone.

Croak. How do I look now? Sir, I am your very humble servant. Madam, I am yours. What you are going off, are you? Then, first, if you please, take a word or two from me with you before you go. Tell

where you are going? and when you have that, perhaps, I shall know as little as I did before.

Leon. If that be so, our answer might but increase your displeasure, without adding to your information.

Croak. I want no information from you, puppy: and you too, good madam, what answer have you got? Eh, [*A cry without, Stop him!*] I think I heard a noise. My friend Honeywood, without—has he seized the incendiary? Ah, no, for now I hear no more on't.

Leon. Honeywood without! Then, sir, it was Mr. Honeywood that directed you hither?

Croak. No, sir, it was Mr. Honeywood conducted me hither.

Leon. Is it possible?

Croak. Possible! why he's in the house now, sir. More anxious about me than my own son, sir.

Leon. Then, sir, he's a villain.

Croak. How, sirrah! a villain, because he takes most care of your father? I'll not bear it. I tell you I'll not bear it. Honeywood is a friend to the family, and I'll have him treated as such.

Leon. I shall study to repay his friendship as it deserves.

Croak. Ah, rogue, if you knew how earnestly he entered into my griefs, and pointed out the means to detect them, you would love him as I do. [*A cry without, Stop him!*]—Fire and fury! they have seized the incendiary: they have the villain, the incendiary in view. Stop him! Stop an incendiary, a murderer! Stop him! [*Exit.*

Olivia. O, my terrors! What can this new tumult mean?

Leon. Some new mark, I suppose, of Mr. Honeywood's sincerity. But we shall have satisfaction: he shall give me instant satisfaction.

Olivia. It must not be, my Leontine, it [illegible] my esteem or my happiness. Whatever be [illegible] let us not add guilt to our misfortunes.—Consider that our innocence will shortly be all we have left us. You must forgive him.

Leon. Forgive him! Has he not in every instance betrayed us? Forced me to borrow money from him, which appears a mere trick to delay us: promised to keep my father engaged till we were out of danger, and here brought him to the very scene of our escape?

Olivia. Don't be too precipitate. We may yet be mistaken.

Enter POSTBOY, *dragging in* JARVIS: HONEYWOOD *entering soon after.*

Post. Ay, master, we have him fast enough. Here is the incendiary dog. I'm entitled to the reward: I'll take my oath I heard him ask for the money at the bar, and then run for it.

Mr. H. Come, bring him along. Let us see him. Let him learn to blush for his crimes. [*Discovering his Mistake.*] Death! what's here! Jarvis, Leontine, Olivia! What can all this mean?

Jarvis. Why, I'll tell you what it means: that I was an old fool, and that you are my master—that's all.

Mr. H. Confusion!

Leon. Yes, sir, I find you have kept your word with me. After such baseness, I wonder how you can venture to see the man you have injured.

Mr. H. My dear Leontine, by my life, my honour——

Leon. Peace, peace, for shame; and do not continue to aggravate baseness by hypocrisy. I know you, sir, I know you.

Mr. H. Why, won't you hear me! By all that's just, I knew not——

Leon. Hear you, sir! to what purpose? I now see through all your low arts; your ever complying with every opinion; your never refusing any request; your friendship as common as a prostitute's favours, and as fallacious; all these things, sir, have long been contemptible to the world, and are now perfectly so to me.

Mr. H. Ha! contemptible to the world! That reaches me! [*Aside.*

Leon. All the seeming sincerity of your professions I now find were only allurements to betray; and all your seeming regret for their consequences, only calculated to cover the cowardice of your heart. Draw, villain!

Enter CROAKER, *out of Breath.*

Croak. Where is the villain? Where is the incendiary? [*Seizing the* POSTBOY.] Hold him fast, the dog; he has the gallows in his face Come, you dog, confess; confess all, and hang yourself.

Postboy. Zounds! master, what do you throttle me for?

Croak. [*Beating him.*] Dog, do you resist? do you resist?

Postboy. Zounds! master, I'm not he; there's the man, that we thought was the rogue, and turns out to be one of the company!

Croak. How!

Mr. H. Mr. Croaker, we have all been under a strange mistake here and find there is nobody guilty; it was all an error; entirely an error of our own.

Croak. And I say, sir, that you're in an error; for there's guilt and double guilt, a plot, a damned jesuitical pestilential plot, and I must have proof of it.

Mr. H. Do but hear me.

Croak. What, you intend to bring them off, I suppose; I'll hear not ing.

Mr. H. Madam, you seem at least calm enough to hear reason.

Olivia. Excuse me.

Mr. H. Good Jarvis, let me then explain it to you.

Jarvis. What signifies explanations, when the thing is done?

Mr. H. Will nobody hear me? Was there ever such a set, so blinded by passion and prejudice! [*To the* POSTBOY.] My good friend, I believe you'll be surprised when I assure you——

Postboy. Sure me nothing—I'm sure of nothing but a good beating.

Croak. Come, then, you, madam, if you ever hope for any favour or forgiveness, tell me sincerely all you know of this affair.

Olivia. Unhappily, sir, I'm but too much the cause of your suspicions: you see before you, sir, one that, with false pretences, has stepped into your family to betray it: not your daughter——

Croak. Not my daughter!

Olivia. Not your daugoter—but a mean deceiver—who—support me, I cannot——

Mr. H. Help! she's going—give her air.

Croak. Ay, ay, take the young woman to the air; I would not hurt a hair of her head, whose ever daughter she may be—not so bad as that neither.—[*Exeunt—all but* CROAKER.] Yes, yes, all's out; I now see the whole affair—my son is either married, or going to be so, to this lady, whom he imposed upon me as his sister. Ay, certainly so; and yet I don't find it afflicts me so much as one would think. There's the advantage of fretting away our misfortunes beforehand; we never feel them when they come.

Enter MISS RICHLAND *and* SIR WILLIAM.

Sir W. But how do you know, madam, that my nephew intends setting off from this place?

Miss R. My maid assured me he was come to this inn, and my own knowledge of his intending to leave the kingdom, suggested the rest. But what do I see, my guardian here before us! Who, my dear sir, could have expected meeting you here! to what accident do we owe this pleasure?

Croak. To a fool, I believe.

Miss R. But to what purpose do you come?

Croak. To play the fool.

Miss R. But with whom?

Croak. With greater fools than myself.

Miss R. Explain.

Croak. Why, Mr. Honeywood brought me here, to do nothing, now I am here; and my son is going to be married to I don't who, that is here; so now you are as wise as I am.

Miss R. Married! to whom, sir?

Croak. To Olivia; my daughter, as I took her to be; but who the devil she is, or whose daughter she is, I know no more than the man in the moon.

Sir W. Then, sir, I can inform you; and, though a stranger, you shall find me a friend to your family: it will be enough at present to assure you, that, both in point of birth and fortune, the young lady is at least your son's equal. Being left by her father, Sir James Woodville——

Croak. Sir James Woodville! What, of the West?

Sir W. Being left by him, I say, to the care of a mercenary wretch, whose only aim was to secure her fortune to himself, she was sent into France, under pretence of education; and there every art was tried to fix her for life in a convent, contrary to her inclinations. Of this I was informed upon my arrival at

Paris; and, as I had been once her father's frie[nd] I did all in my power to frustrate her guardian's ba[d] intentions. I had even meditated to rescue her from his authority, when your son stepped in with more pleasing violence, gave her liberty, and you a daughter.

Croak. But I intend to have a daughter of my own chusing, sir. A young lady, sir, whose fortune, by my interest with those that have interest, will be double what my son has a right to expect. Do you know Mr. Lofty, sir?

Sir W. Yes, sir; and know that you are deceived in him. But step this way, and I'll convince you.

[CROAKER *and* SIR WILLIAM *confer.*

Enter HONEYWOOD.

Mr. H. Obstinate man! still to persist in his outrage! Insulted by him, despised by all, I now begin to grow contemptible, even to myself. How have I sunk, by too great an assiduity to please! How have I overtaxed all my abilities, lest the approbation of a single fool should escape me; But all is now over; I have survived my reputation, my fortune, my friendships, and nothing remains henceforward for me but solitude and repentance.

Miss R. Is it true, Mr. Honeywood, that you are setting off, without taking leave of your friends? The report is, that you are quitting England: Can it be?

Mr. H. Yes, madam; and, though I am so unhappy as to have fallen under your displeasure, yet, thank Heaven, I leave you to happiness; to one who loves you, and deserves your love; to one who has power to procure you affluence, and generosity to improve your enjoyment of it.

Miss R. And are you sure, sir, that the gentleman you mean is what you describe him?

Mr. H. I have the best assurances of it, his serving me. He does indeed deserve the highest happiness, and that is in your power to confer. As for me, weak and wavering as I have been, obliged by all, and incapable of serving any, what happiness can I find but in solitude? What hope but in being forgotten?

Miss R. A thousand! to live among friends that esteem you, whose happiness it will be to be permitted to oblige you.

Mr. H. No, madam; my resolution is fixed. Inferiority among strangers is easy; but among those that once were equals, insupportable. Nay, to shew you how far my resolution can go, I can now speak with calmness of my former follies, my vanity, my dissipation, my weakness. I will even confess, that, among the number of my other presumptions, I had the insolence to think of loving you. Yes, madam, while I was pleading the passion of another, my heart was tortured with its own. But it is over, it was unworthy our friendship, and let it be forgotten.

Miss R. You amaze me!

Mr. H. But you'll forgive it, I know you will; since the confession should not have come from me even now, but to convince you of the sincerity of my intention of never mentioning it more. [*Going.*

Miss R. Stay, sir, one moment—Ha! he here—

Enter LOFTY.

Lofty. Is the coast clear? None but friends. I have followed you here with a trifling piece of intelligence: but it goes no farther; things are not yet ripe for a discovery. I have spirits working at a certain board; your affair at the Treasury will be done in less than—a thousand years.—Mum!

Miss R. Sooner, sir, I should hope.

Lofty. Why, yes, I believe it may, if it falls into proper hands, that know where to push, and where to parry; that know how the land lies—eh, Honeywood?

Miss R. It is fallen into yours.

Lofty. Well, to keep you no longer in suspense, your thing is done. It is done, I say—that's all. I have just had assurances from Lord Neverout, that the claim has been examined, and found admissible. Quietus is the word, madam.

Mr. H. But how! his lordship has been at Newmarket these ten days.

Lofty. Indeed! Then Sir Gilbert Goose must have been most damnably mistaken. I had it of him.

Miss R. He! why Sir Gilbert and his family have been in the country this month!

Lofty. This month! It must certainly be so—— Sir Gilbert's letter did come to me from Newmarket, so that he must have met his lordship there; and so it came about.——I have his letter about me, I'll read it to you.—[*Taking out a large Bundle.*] That's from Paoli of Corsica. That from the Marquis of Squilachi.——Have you a mind to see a letter from Count Poniatowski, now King of Poland—Honest Pon—[*Searching.*]—O, sir, what are you here too? —I'll tell you what, honest friend, if you have not absolutely delivered my letter to Sir William Honeywood, you may return it. The thing will do without him.

Sir W. Sir, I have delivered it, and must inform you, it was received with the most mortifying contempt.

Croak. Contempt! Mr. Lofty, what can that mean?

Lofty. Let him go on, let him go on, I say. You'll find it come to something presently.

Sir W. Yes, sir, I believe you'll be amazed, if, after waiting some time in the antechamber, after being surveyed with insolent curiosity by the passing servants, I was at last assured, that Sir William Honeywood knew no such person, and I must certainly have been imposed upon.

Lofty. Good; let me die, very good. Ha! ha! ha!

Croak. Now, for my life, I can't find out half the goodness of it.

Lofty. You can't? Ha! ha!

Croak. No, for the soul of me; I think it was as confounded a bad answer, as ever was sent from one private gentleman to another.

Lofty. And so you can't find out the force of the message! Why, I was in the house at that very time. Ha! ha! It was I, that sent that very answer to my own letter. Ha! ha!

Croak. Indeed! How! why!

Lofty. In one word, things between Sir William and me must be behind the curtain. A party has many eyes. He sides with Lord Buzzard, I side with Sir Gilbert Goose. So that unriddles the mystery.

Croak. And so it does, indeed, and all my suspicions are over.

Lofty. Your suspicious!——What then you have been suspecting—you have been suspecting, have you? Mr. Croaker, you and I were friends—we are friends no longer. Never talk to me. It's over; I say, it's over.

Croak. As I hope for your favour, I did not mean to offend. It escaped me. Don't be discomposed.

Lofty. Zounds, sir, but I am discomposed, and will be discomposed. To be treated thus!—Who am I? Was it for this I have been dreaded both by the ins and outs?——Have I been libelled in the Gazetteer, and praised in St. James's? have I been chaired at Osbourn's, and a speaker at Guildhall? have I had my hand to addresses, and my head in the print-shops? and talk to me of suspects! Who am I, I say, who am I?

Sir W. Since, sir, you're so pressing for an answer, I'll tell you who you are. A gentleman as well acquainted with politics as with men in power; as well acquainted with persons of fashion, as with modesty; with lords of the Treasury, as with truth; and with

all, as you are with Sir William Honeywood. I am Sir William Honeywood.

[*Discovering his Ensigns of the Bath.*

Croak. Sir William Honeywood!

Mr. H. Astonishment! my uncle! [*Aside.*

Lofty. So then my confounded genius has been all this time only leading me up to the garret, in order to fling me out of the window.

Croak. What, Mr. Importance, and are these your works! Suspect you! You, who have been dreaded by the ins and outs! You, who have had your hand to addresses, and your head stuck up in print-shops! If you were served right, you should have your head stuck up in the pillory.

Lofty. Ay, stick it where you will, for, by the lord, it cuts but a poor figure where it sticks at present.

Sir W. Well, Mr. Croaker, I hope you now see how incapable this gentleman is of serving you, and how little Miss Richland has to expect from his influence.

Croak. Ay, sir, too well I see it; and I can't but say I have had some boding of it these ten days. So I'm resolved, since my son has placed his affections on a lady of moderate fortune, to be satisfied with his choice, and not run the hazard of another Mr. Lofty, in helping him to a better.

Sir W. I approve your resolution, and here they come, to receive a confirmation of your pardon and consent.

Enter MRS. CROAKER, JARVIS, LEONTINE, *and* OLIVIA.

Mrs. C. Where's my husband!—Come, come, lovey, you must forgive them. Jarvis here, has been to tell me the whole affair; and, I say, you must forgive them. Our own was a stolen match, you know, my dear; and we never had any reason to repent of it.

Croak. I wish we could both say so: however, this

gentleman, Sir William Honeywood, has been beforehand with you, in obtaining their pardon. So, if the two poor fools have a mind to marry, I think, we can tack them together without crossing the Tweed for it. [*Joining their Hands.*

Leon. How blest, and unexpected! What, what can we say to such goodness! But our future obedience shall be the best reply. And, as for this gentleman, to whom we owe——

Sir W. Excuse me, sir, if I interrupt your thanks, as I have here an interest that calls me. [*Turning to* HONEYWOOD.] Yes, sir, you are surprised to see me; and I own that a desire of correcting your follies led me hither. I saw, with indignation, the errors of a mind that only sought applause from others; that easiness of disposition, which, though inclined to the right, had not courage to condemn the wrong. I saw with regret those splendid errors, that still took name from some neighbouring duty. Your charity, that was but injustice; your benevolence, that was but weakness; and your friendship but credulity. I saw, with regret, great talents and extensive learning, only employed to add sprightliness to error, and increase your perplexities. I saw your mind with a thousand natural charms: but the greatness of its beauty served only to heighten my pity for its prostitution.

Mr. H. Cease to upbraid me, sir; I have for some time but too strongly felt the justice of your reproaches. But there is one way still left me. Yes, sir, I have determined, this very hour, to quit for ever a place where I have made myself the voluntary slave of all; and to seek among strangers that fortitude which may give strength to the mind, and marshal all its dissipated virtues. Yet, ere I depart, permit me to solicit favour for this gentleman; who, notwithstanding what has happened, has laid me under the most signal obligations. Mr. Lofty—

Lofty. Mr. Honeywood, I'm resolved upon a re-

formation, as well as you. I now begin to find, that the man who first invented the art of speaking truth was a much more cunning fellow than I thought him. And to prove that I design to speak truth for the future, I must now assure you, that you owe your late enlargement to another; as, upon my soul, I had no hand in the matter. So now, if any of the company has a mind for preferment, he may take my place. I'm determined to resign. [*Exit.*

Mr. H. How have I been deceived!

Sir W. No, sir, you have been obliged to a kinder, fairer friend, for that favour—To Miss Richland. Would she complete our joy, and make the man she has honoured by her friendship, happy in her love, I should then forget all, and be as blest as the welfare of my dearest kinsman can make me.

Miss R. After what is past, it would be but affectation to pretend to indifference. Yes, I will own an attachment, which, I find, was more than friendship. And if my entreaties cannot alter his resolution to quit the country, I will even try if my hand has not power to detain him. [*Giving her Hand.*

Mr. H. Heavens! how can I have deserved all this? How express my happiness, my gratitude! A moment, like this, overpays an age of apprehension.

Croak. Well, now I see content in every face; but Heaven send we be all better this day three months!

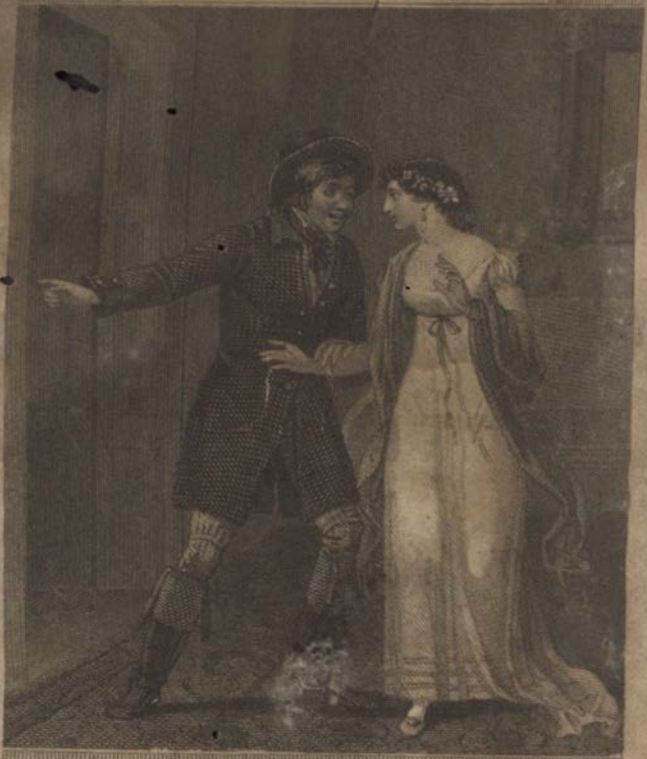
Sir W. Henceforth, nephew, learn to respect yourself. He, who seeks only for applause from without, has all his happiness in another's keeping.

Mr. H. Yes, sir, I now plainly perceive my errors. My vanity, in attempting to please all, by fearing to offend any—my meanness, in approving folly, lest fools should disapprove. Henceforth, therefore, it shall be my study to reserve my pity for real distress; my friendship for true merit; and my love for her, who first taught me what it is to be happy.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*

THE END.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER



TONY. FLY TO YOUR PAPA, HE'LL TELL YOU MORE OF THE MATTER.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Drawn by H.Corbould. Published by Longman & Co.1816. Engraved by C.Heath.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER;

A COMEDY.

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY DR GOLDSMITH.

A' PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES ROYAL,

DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

NTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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Printed by James Ballantyne & Co.

REMARKS.

THE value of this comedy is enhanced by having the name of Goldsmith prefixed;—an author, who adventured his talents in almost every species of writing, was in all highly successful, and in some pre-eminently so. Yet, possessing this vast literary treasure, he lived in poverty, and died broken-hearted in consequence of his necessities.

Oliver Goldsmith, the author of this comedy, was born at Elphin, in the county of Roscommon, in Ireland, in the year 1729, and was the son of a clergyman. Neither at school, nor at the university of Dublin, where he was a student, did he give any proof of that genius which he afterwards evinced. His favourite study at college was medicine; and to qualify himself for the degree of Doctor, he went to Edinburgh, and attended regularly at the lectures given by the physicians of that metropolis.

An unconquerable desire to visit those parts of the continent, to which the English youth of fortune are sent to complete their education, was the next strong propensity which Goldsmith testified: and for want of the means to bear him on this tour as a gentleman, he boldly set out on foot; furnished with the best of all provision for a traveller—curiosity.

The difficulties he encountered in his long journey—during which he was often compelled to play a tune on a flute he had taken for his own amusement, in order to gain food or lodging—even these difficulties were, unhappily, no antidote against his sinking under the sufferings of indigence when he returned and resided in England.

That Goldsmith, had he not been profuse, might, on commencing author, have supported himself in all the conveniences of life, many will urge; but what are held as conveniences by one man, are considered only as the cruel means of existence by another. Yet poverty has a sound which every temperate and courageous mind would contemn, but that it includes other wants, more poignant than those of a fine house, or a well-furnished table. Poverty, to an author, includes the deprivation of wholesome air, and all the beauteous works of the creation.—It means even worse than this—to tear its wretched victim from all the soothing joys of artificial life.—Poverty, to an enlightened author, is the gaoler of a solitary prison; for it bars from his homely cell all such companions as make society valuable; and he prefers the loneliness inflicted by the law upon criminals, to the conversation of the vulgar or the uninformed.

It ought not therefore to be imputed to the author of this play, that he was prodigal of the wages of his muse, from impatience under the necessities of the body—it was the depression of his spirit in solitude, which led him to seek intercourse among men of similar talents with himself, at the expence of his

probity. The mental delights of good company his utmost industry could not purchase fairly. He therefore incurred debts to an amount which all his poetic genius could not liquidate, and, in acknowledgement, laid down his life.

He died on the 4th of April, 1774, in the 45th year of his age.

Dr Johnson is said to have had a most sincere friendship for Goldsmith—That Goldsmith, in return loved and revered Johnson, the affection expressed in his dedication of this play to him is a sufficient proof. Yet there is a light sentence in a note from Johnson, wherein he announces his friend's death to some of their mutual acquaintance, which bespeaks not that tenderness which might be expected from a man who professed to love him. After saying that Goldsmith had died a sacrifice to his embarrassed circumstances, for that he owed no less than two thousand pounds, the doctor adds jocosely—"Was ever poet so trusted before!"

It was only two years previous to the author's death, that "She Stoops to Conquer" appeared on the stage; and it was not without much trouble and anxiety to him that it appeared at all.—Colman, the elder, was then manager of Covent Garden theatre, and had so unfavourable an opinion of the work, as to predict, even after it was in rehearsal, its condemnation.

Notwithstanding the brilliant success which ensued, and the powerful name of the author of the play, there were critics of that time, and there are such

even at the present, who approve the judgment of Colman in defiance to the decision of the public.

"She Stoops to Conquer" has indeed more the quality of farce than of a regular five-act drama: but, although some of the incidents are improbable, there is not one character in the piece which is not perfectly in nature—The reader will find his country friends in the whole family of the Hardcastles; and, most likely, one of his town acquaintances in the modest Mr Marlow.—From the most severe judge, the name of farce can be this comedy's sole reproach; and he must even then allow, that it is an extremely pleasant one; and a far better evening's entertainment, than the sentimental comedies of Kelly and other dramatists of that day—at which the auditors were never incited either to laugh or to cry.

Although this comedy was pressed on the manager of Covent Garden by the friends of the author, and most authors confide implicitly in the partial judgement of their friends, yet, when the evening of trial came, poor Goldsmith's dread of the event was so powerful, that he is said to have been driven by it, in a hasty walk he knew not whither, as far as Kensington Gravel-pits, to be out of the frightful din which might pronounce its doom.

Who does not envy the friend that first told him his fears had been vain? Who does not rejoice, that the whim and frolic of his play delighted the town for the whole season? Who does not grieve, that he had so short a time to remain in the world to enjoy his triumph?

It is painful to record the imperfections of men who do not possess qualities which outweigh them —but, were Goldsmith's various faults all pointed out, his various merits would preponderate. A man who has written "The Deserted Village" and "The Traveller," may say and do innumerable foolish things before his follies can overbalance his weight of worth.

Whimsical anecdotes are therefore related of this great poet's foibles and humours, with but slight prejudice to his character; though they all confirm the truth of the following couplet, extracted from lines written on him by one of his most intimate friends:—

"Like a fleet-footed hunter, though first in the chase,
On the road of plain sense he oft slacken'd his pace."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.	COVENT GARDEN.
SIR CHARLES MARLOW	*Mr Dormer.*	*Mr Powell.*
HARDCASTLE	*Mr Dowton.*	*Mr Munden.*
YOUNG MARLOW	*Mr Barrymore.*	*Mr Mansel.*
HASTINGS	*Mr Holland.*	*Mr Whitfield.*
TONY LUMPKIN	*Mr Cherry.*	*Mr Knight.*
STINGO	*Mr Maddocks.*	
DIGGORY	*Mr Purser.*	*Mr Simmons.*
ROGER	*Mr Chatterley*	*Mr Abbot.*
RALPH	*Mr Webb.*	
GREGORY	*Mr Rhodes.*	
TOM TWIST	*Mr Sparks.*	
JACK SLANG	*Mr Evans.*	*Mr Rees.*
TOM TICKLE	*Mr Cooke.*	
JEREMY	*Mr Fisher.*	*Mr Farley.*
MAT MUGGINS	*Mr Gibbon.*	
SERVANT	*Mr Tokely.*	
MRS HARDCASTLE	*Mrs Sparks.*	*Mrs Davenport.*
MISS HARDCASTLE	*Miss Duncan.*	*Mrs Gibbs.*
MISS NEVILLE	*Mrs Scott.*	*Miss Mansell.*
MAID	*Miss Tidswell.*	*Miss Leserve.*

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Chamber in an old-fashioned House.

Enter MRS HARDCASTLE *and* MR HARDCASTLE.

Mrs Hard. I vow, Mr Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country, but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then, to rub off the rust a little? There's the two Miss Hoggs, and our neighbour Mrs Grigsby, go to take a month's polishing every winter.

Hard. Ay, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them a whole year. I wonder why London cannot keep its own fools at home. In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel faster than a stage-coach. Its fopperies come down, not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.

Mrs Hard. Ay, your times were fine times, indeed: you have been telling us of them for many a long year. Here we live in an old rumbling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn, but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old

Mrs Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripplegate, the lame dancing-master: and all our entertainment your old stories of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned trumpery.

Hard. And I love every thing that's old: old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine; and, I believe, Dorothy, [*Taking her Hand.*] you'll own I have been pretty fond of an old wife.

Mrs Hard. Lord, Mr Hardcastle, you're for ever at your Dorothy's, and your old wife's. You may be a Darby but I'll be no Joan, I promise you. I'm not so old as you'd make me by more than one good year. Add twenty to twenty, and make money of that.

Hard. Let me see! twenty added to twenty, makes just fifty and seven.

Mrs. Hard. It's false, Mr Hardcastle: I was but twenty when I was brought to bed of Tony, that I had by Mr Lumpkin, my first husband; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

Hard. Nor ever will, I dare answer for him. Ay, you have taught him finely.

Mrs Hard. No matter, Tony Lumpkin has a good fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a year

Hard. Learning, quotha! a mere composition of tricks and mischief.

Mrs Hard. Humour, my dear; nothing but humour. Come, Mr. Hardcastle, you must allow the boy a little humour.

Hard. I'd sooner allow him an horsepond. If burning the footmen's shoes, frightening the maids, worrying the kittens, be humour, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I popt my bald head in Mrs Frizzle's face.

Mrs Hard. And am I to blame? The poor boy was always too sickly to do any good. A school would be his death. When he comes to be a little stronger, who knows what a year or two's Latin may do for him?

Hard. Latin for him! a cat and a fiddle. No, no, the alehouse and the stable are the only schools he'll ever go to.

Mrs Hard. Well, we must not snub the poor boy now, for I believe we sha'n't have him long among us. Any body who looks in his face may see he's consumptive.

Hard. Ay, if growing too fat be one of the symptoms.

Mrs Hard. He coughs sometimes.

Hard. Yes, when his liquor goes the wrong way.

Mrs Hard. I'm actually afraid of his lungs.

Hard. And truly so am I; for he sometimes whoops like a speaking trumpet—[TONY *hallooing behind the Scenes.*]—O there he goes—A very consumptive figure truly!

Enter TONY, *crossing the Stage.*

Mrs Hard. Tony, where are you going, my charmer? Won't you give papa and I a little of your company, lovee?

Tony. I'm in haste, mother, I can't stay.

Mrs Hard. You sha'n't venture out this raw evening, my dear: You look most shockingly.

Tony. I can't stay, I tell you. The Three Pigeons expects me down every moment There's some fun going forward.

Hard. Ay; the alehouse, the old place: I thought so.

Mrs Hard. A low, paltry set of fellows!

Tony. Not so low neither. There's Dick Muggins the exciseman, Jack Slang the horse-doctor, Little

Aminadab that grinds the music-box, and Tom Twist that spins the pewter platter.

Mrs Hard. Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night at least.

Tony. As for disappointing them, I should not so much mind; but I can't abide to disappoint myself.

Mrs Hard. [*Detaining him.*] You sha'n't go.

Tony. I will, I tell you.

Mrs Hard. I say you sha'n't.

Tony. We'll see which is strongest, you or I.

[*Exit, hauling her out.*

Hard. Ay, there goes a pair, that only spoil each other. But is not the whole age in a combination to drive sense and discretion out of doors? There's my pretty darling Kate; the fashions of the times have almost infected her too. By living a year or two in town, she is as fond of gauze, and French frippery, as the best of them.

Enter Miss Hardcastle.

—Blessings on my pretty innocence! Drest out as usual, my Kate. Goodness! What a quantity of superfluous silk hast thou got about thee, girl! I could never teach the fools of this age, that the indigent world could be clothed out of the trimmings of the vain.

Miss Hard. You know our agreement, sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner; and in the evening, I put on my housewife's dress to please you.

Hard. Well, remember I insist on the terms of our agreement; and, by the bye, I believe I shall have occasion to try your obedience this very evening.

Miss Hard. I protest, sir, I don't comprehend your meaning.

Hard. Then, to be plain with you, Kate, I expect the young gentleman I have chosen to be your husband from town this very day. I have his father's

letter, in which he informs me his son is set out, and that he intends to follow himself shortly after.

Miss Hard. Indeed! I wish I had known something of this before. Bless me, how shall I behave? It's a thousand to one I sha'n't like him; our meeting will be so formal, and so like a thing of business, that I shall find no room for friendship or esteem.

Hard. Depend upon it, child, I'll never control your choice; but Mr Marlow, whom I have pitched upon, is the son of my old friend, Sir Charles Marlow, of whom you have heard me talk so often. The young gentleman has been bred a scholar, and is designed for an employment in the service of his country. I am told he's a man of an excellent understanding.

Miss Hard. Is he?

Hard. Very generous.

Miss Hard. I believe I shall like him.

Hard. Young and brave.

Miss Hard. I'm sure I shall like him.

Hard. And very handsome.

Miss Hard. My dear papa, say no more, [*Kissing Hand.*] he's mine, I'll have him.

Hard. And to crown all, Kate, he's one of the st bashful and reserved young fellows in all the rld.

Miss Hard. Eh! you have frozen me to death ain. That word reserved has undone all the rest of his accomplishments. A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband.

Hard. On the contrary, modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues. It was the very feature in his character that first struck me.

Miss Hard. He must have more striking features to catch me, I promise you. However, if he be so young, so handsome, and so every thing, as you mention, I believe he'll do still. I think I'll have him.

Hard. Ay, Kate, but there is still an obstacle; It's more than an even wager he may not have you.

Miss Hard. My dear papa, why will you mortify one so?—Well, if he refuses, instead of breaking my heart at his indifference, I'll only break my glass for its flattery; set my cap to some newer fashion, and look out for some less difficult admirer.

Hard. Bravely resolved! In the meantime I'll go prepare the servants for his reception; as we seldom see company, they want as much training as a company of recruits, the first day's muster. [*Exit.*

Miss Hard. Lud, this news of papa's puts me all in a flutter! Young, handsome; these he put last; but I put them foremost. Sensible, good-natured; I like all that. But then reserved, and sheepish, that's much against him. Yet can't he be cured of his timidity, by being taught to be proud of his wife? Yes, and can't I—But I vow I'm disposing of the husband before I have secured the lover.

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss Hard. I'm glad you're come, my dear. Tell me, Constance, how do I look this evening? Is there any thing whimsical about me? Is it one of my well-looking days, child? Am I in face to-day?

Miss Nev. Perfectly, my dear. Yet now I look again—bless me!—sure no accident has happened among the canary birds or the gold fishes. Has your brother or the cat been meddling? Or has the last novel been too moving?

Miss Hard. No; nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out——I have been threatened with a lover.

Miss Nev. And his name——

Miss Hard. Is Marlow.

Miss Nev. Indeed!

Miss Hard. The son of Sir Charles Marlow.

Miss Nev. As I live, the most intimate friend of

Mr Hastings, my admirer. They are never asunder. I believe you must have seen him, when we lived in town.

Miss Hard. Never.

Miss Nev. He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue he is the modestest man alive: but his acquaintance give him a very different character among creatures of another stamp: you understand me?

Miss Hard. An odd character, indeed. I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do? Pshaw, think no more of him, but trust to occurrences for success. But how goes on your own affair, my dear; has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony, as usual?

Miss Nev. I have just come from one of our agreeable tete-a-tetes. She has been saying a hundred tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

Miss Hard. And her partiality is such, that she actually thinks him so. A fortune like yours is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the sole management of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go out of the family.

Miss Nev. A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists in jewels, is no such mighty temptation. But at any rate if my dear Hastings be but constant, I make no doubt to be too hard for her at last. However, I let her suppose that I am in love with her son, and she never once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

Miss Hard. My good brother holds out stoutly. I could almost love him for hating you so.

Miss Nev. It is a good-natured creature at bottom, and I'm sure would wish to see me married to any body but himself. But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoon's walk round the improvements. Allons. Courage is necessary, as our affairs are critical.

Miss Hard. Would it were bed time, and all were well! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

An Alehouse Room.

Several shabby Fellows with Punch and Tobacco. TONY *at the Head of the Table, a little higher than the rest: A Mallet in his Hand.*

All. Bravo, bravo.

1st Fel. The 'Squire has got spunk in him.

2d Fel. I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never gives us nothing that's low.

3d Fel. O damn any thing that's low, I cannot bear it.

4th Fel. The genteel thing is the genteel thing at any time. If so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly.

3d Fel. I like the maxim of it, Master Muggins. What though I am obligated to dance a bear, a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelest of tunes. Water Parted, or the minuet in Ariadne.

2d Fel. What a pity it is the 'Squire is not come to his own! It would be well for all the publicans within ten miles round of him.

Tony. Ecod, and so it would, Master Slang. I'd then show what it was to keep choice of company.

2d Fel. O he takes after his own father for that. To be sure old 'Squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. For winding the streight horn, or beating a thicket for a hare, or a wench, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place, that he kept the best horses, dogs, and girls, in the whole country.

Tony. Ecod, and when I'm of age I'll be no bastard, I promise you. I have been thinking of Bett Bouncer and the miller's grey mare to begin with. But come, my boys, drink about and be merry, for you pay no reckoning.—Well, Stingo, what's the matter?

Enter LANDLORD.

Land. There be two gentlemen in a post-chaise at the door. They have lost their way upo' the forest; and they are talking something about Mr Hardcastle.

Tony. As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister.—Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set them right in a twinkling. [*Exit* LANDLORD.] Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, step down for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. [*Exeunt* MOB.

Tony. Father-in-law has been calling me whelp, and hound, this half year. Now, if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumbletonian. But then I'm afraid—afraid of what? I shall soon be worth fifteen hundred a year, and let him frighten me out of that if he can.

Enter LANDLORD, *conducting* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS.

Mar. What a tedious uncomfortable day have we had of it! We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come above threescore.

Hast. And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of yours, that would not let us enquire more frequently on the way.

Mar. I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet; and often stand the chance of an unmannerly answer.

Hast. At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer.

Tony. No offence, gentlemen. But I'm told you have been enquiring for one Mr Hardcastle, in these parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in?

Hast. Not in the least, sir, but should thank you for information.

Tony. Nor the way you came?

Hast. No, sir; but if you can inform us——

Tony. Why, gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, nor where you are, nor the road you came, the first thing I have to inform you is, that—you have lost your way.

Mar. We wanted no information of that, sir.

Tony. Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold as to ask the place from whence you came?

Mar. That's not necessary towards directing us where we are to go.

Tony. No offence: but question for question is all fair, you know. Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle, a cross-grained, old-fashioned, whimsical fellow, with an ugly face; a daughter, and a pretty son?

Hast. We have not seen the gentleman, but he has the family you mention.

Tony. The daughter, a tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative maypole——The son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that every body is fond of.

Mar. Our information differs in this. The daughter is said to be well-bred and beautiful; the son, an awkward booby, reared up, and spoiled at his mother's apron string.

Tony. He-he-hem—Then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

Hast. Unfortunate!

Tony. It's a damned long, dark, boggy, dirty, dan-

gerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr Hardcastle's—[*Winking upon the* LANDLORD.]—Mr Hardcastle's, of Quagmire Marsh, you know.

Land. Master Hardcastle's! Lack-a-daisy, my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong! When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have crossed down Squash-lane.

Mar. Cross down Squash-lane!

Land. Then you were to keep straight forward, till you came to where four roads meet.

Mar. Come to where four roads meet!

Tony. Ay; but you must be sure to take only one of them.

Mar. O sir, you're facetious.

Tony. Then keeping to the right, you are to go sideways till you come upon Crackskull Common: there you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward, till you come to Farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the Farmer's barn, you are to turn to the right and then to the left, and then to the right about again, till you find out the old mill——

Mar. Zounds, man! we could as soon find out the longitude!

Hast. What's to be done, Marlow?

Mar. This house promises but a poor reception; though perhaps the landlord can accommodate us.

Land. Alack, master, we have but one spare bed in the whole house.

Tony. And to my knowledge that's taken up by three lodgers already.—[*After a Pause, in which the Rest seem disconcerted.*] I have hit it. Don't you think, Stingo, our landlady could accommodate the gentlemen by the fireside, with——three chairs and a bolster?

Hast. Damn your fireside!

Mar. And your three chairs and a bolster, say I.

Tony. You do, do you?—then let me see—what—if you go on a mile further, to the Buck's Head? the

old Buck's Head on the hill, one of the best inns in the whole country?

Hast. O ho! so we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

Land. [*Apart to* TONY.] Sure, you ben't sending them to your father's as an inn, be you?

Tony. Mum, you fool you. Let them find that out.—[*To them.*] You have only to keep on straight forward, till you come to a large old house by the road side. You'll see a pair of large horns over the door. That's the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

Hast. Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't miss the way?

Tony. No, no: But I tell you though, the landlord is rich, and going to leave off business; so he wants to be thought a gentleman, saving your presence, he! he! he! He'll be for giving you his company, and ecod if you mind him, he'll persuade you that his mother was an alderman, and his aunt a justice of peace.

Land. A troublesome old blade, to be sure; but a keeps as good wines and beds as any in the whole country.

Mar. Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want no further connexion. We are to turn to the right, did you say?

Tony. No, no; straight forward. I'll just step myself, and shew you a piece of the way. [*To the* LANDLORD.] Mum.

Land. Ah, bless your heart, for a sweet, pleasant—damned mischievous son of a whore. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Room in HARDCASTLE'S *House.*

Enter HARDCASTLE, *followed by Three or Four awkward* SERVANTS.

Hard. Well, I hope you're perfect in the table exercise. I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places, and can show that you have been used to good company, without stirring from home?

All. Ay, ay.

Hard. When company comes, you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frighted rabbits in a warren.

All. No, no.

Hard. You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn, are to make a shew at the side table; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind my chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets Take your hands from your pockets, Roger; and from your head, you blockhead you. See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

Digg. Ay, mind how I hold them. I learned to hold my hands this way, when I was upon drill for the militia. And so being upon drill——

Hard. You must not be so talkative, Diggory.

You must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk, and not think of talking; you must see us drink, and not think of drinking; you must see us eat, and not think of eating.

Digg. By the laws, your worship, that's perfectly unpossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forwards, ecod he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

Hard. Blockhead! is not a bellyful in the kitchen as good as a bellyful in the parlour? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

Digg. Ecod, I thank your worship; I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

Hard. Diggory, you are too talkative. Then if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story, at table, you must not all burst out a-laughing, as if you made part of the company.

Digg. Then, ecod, your worship must not tell the story of Old Grouse in the gunroom: I can't help laughing at that—he! he! he!—for the soul of me. We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha! ha! ha!

Hard. Ha! ha! ha! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave? A glass of wine, sir, if you please. [*To* DIGGORY.]—Eh, why don't you move?

Digg. Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upon the table, and then I am as bauld as a lion.

Hard. What, will nobody move?

1 *Serv.* I'm not to leave this place.

2 *Serv.* I'm sure its no pleace of mine.

3 *Serv.* Nor mine, for sartain.

Digg. Wauns, and I'm sure it canna be mine.

Hard. You numskulls! and so while, like your bet-

ters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved? O, you dunces! I find I must begin all over again.——But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard? To your posts, you blockheads! I'll go, in the mean time, and give my old friend's son a hearty welcome at the gate.

[*Exeunt*—SERVANTS *running about different Ways.*

Enter SERVANT, *with Candles, shewing in* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS.

Serv. Welcome, gentlemen, very welcome. This way.

Hast. After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room, and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house; antique, but creditable.

Mar. The usual fate of a large mansion. Having first ruined the master by good housekeeping, it at last comes to levy contributions as an inn.

Hast. As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to pay all these fineries. I have often seen a good sideboard, or a marble chimneypiece, though not actually put in the bill, inflame the bill confoundedly.

Mar. Travellers, George, must pay in all places. The only difference is, that in good inns you pay dearly for luxuries; in bad inns you are fleeced and starved.

Hast. You have lived pretty much among them. In truth, I have been often surprised that you who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense, and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire a requisite share of assurance.

Mar. The Englishman's malady. But tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of? My life has been chiefly spent in a college, or an inn, in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation that chiefly teach men confidence. I

don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single modest woman—except my mother—But among females of another class you know—

Hast. Ay, among them you are impudent enough of all conscience.

Mar. They are of us, you know.

Hast. But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler; you look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.

Mar. Why, man, that's because I do want to steal out of the room. Faith, I have often formed a resolution to break the ice, and rattle away at any rate. But I don't know how, a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has totally overset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty, but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence.

Hast. If you could but say half the fine things to them that I have heard you lavish upon the bar-maid of an inn, or even a college bed-maker—

Mar. Why, George, I can't say fine things to them. They freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle; but to me, a modest woman, drest out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation.

Hast. Ha! ha! ha! At this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry?

Mar. Never, unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy If, indeed, like an eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers, and cousins, and at last to blurt out the broad staring question, of, Madam, will you marry me? No, no, that's a strain much above me, I assure you.

Hast. I pity you. But how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father?

Mar. As I behave to all other ladies. Bow very low; answer yes, or no, to all her demands—But for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face till I see my father's again.

Hast. I'm surprised that one who is so warm a friend can be so cool a lover.

Mar. To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement down was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you; the family don't know you as my friend you are sure of a reception, and let honour do the rest.

Hast. My dear Marlow! But I'll suppress the emotion. Were I a wretch, meanly seeking to carry off a fortune, you should be the last man in the world I would apply to for assistance. But Miss Neville's person is all I ask, and that is mine, both from her deceased father's consent, and her own inclination.

Mar. Happy man! You have talents and art to captivate any woman. I'm doomed to adore the sex, and yet to converse with the only part of it I despise. This stammer in my address, and this awkward prepossessing visage of mine, can never permit me to soar above the reach of a milliner's 'prentice, or one of the duchesses of Drury-lane. Pshaw! this fellow here to interrupt us.

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr Marlow? Sir, you're heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire. I like to give them a hearty reception in the old style at my gate. I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

Mar. [*Aside.*] He has got our names from the servants already. [*To him.*] We approve your caution

and hospitality, sir. [*To* HASTINGS.] I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the morning, I am grown confoundedly ashamed of mine.

Hard. I beg, Mr Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house.

Hast. I fancy, George, you're right: the first blow is half the battle. I intend opening the campaign with the white and gold.

Hard. Mr Marlow—Mr Hastings—gentlemen—pray be under no restraint in this house. This is Liberty-hall, gentlemen. You may do just as you please here.

Mar. Yet, George, if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is over. I think to reserve the embroidery to secure a retreat.

Hard. Your talking of a retreat, Mr Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when he went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison——

Mar. Aye, and we'll summon your garrison, old boy.

Hard. He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men——

Hast. What a strange fellow is this!

Hard. I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men—

Mar. Well, but suppose—

Hard. Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. Now, says the Duke of Marlborough, to George Brooks, that stood next to him—You must have heard of George Brooks—I'll pawn my dukedom, says he, but I take that garrison without spilling a drop of blood. So——

Mar. What, my good friend, if you give us a glass

of punch in the mean time, it would help us to carry on the siege with vigour.

Hard. Punch, sir?

Mar. Yes, sir, punch. A glass of warm punch, after our journey, will be comfortable. This is Liberty-hall, you know.

Enter ROGER *with a Cup.*

Hard. Here's cup, sir.

Mar. [*Aside.*] So this fellow, in his Liberty-hall, will only let us have just what he pleases.

Hard. [*Taking the cup.*] I hope you'll find it to your mind. I have prepared it with my own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, sir? Here, Mr Marlow, here is to our better acquaintance. [*Drinks.*

Mar. [*Aside.*] A very impudent fellow this! but he's a character, and I'll humour him a little. Sir, my service to you. [*Drinks.*

Hast. [*Aside*] I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper, before he has learned to be a gentleman.

Mar. From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then at elections, I suppose.

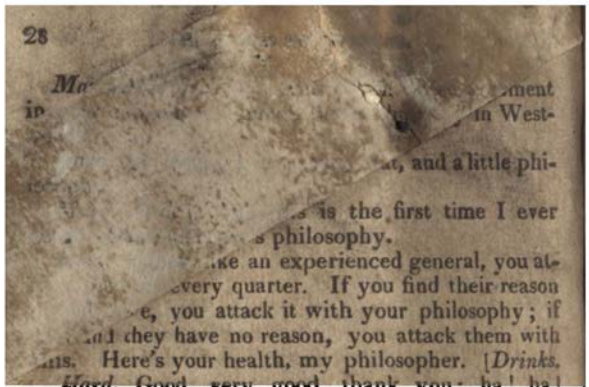
Hard. No, sir, I have long given that work over.

Hast. So, then you have no turn for politics, I find?

Hard. Why no, sir, I no more trouble my head about Hyder Ally, or Ally Cawn, than about Ally Croaker. Sir, my service to you.

Hast. So that, with eating above stairs, and drinking below, with receiving your friends within, and amusing them without, you lead a good pleasant bustling life of it.

Hard. I do stir about a great deal, that's certain. Half the differences of the parish are adjusted in this very parlour.



Ma ment
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is the first time I ever
philosophy.
ke an experienced general, you at-
very quarter. If you find their reason
e, you attack it with your philosophy; if
they have no reason, you attack them with
ns. Here's your health, my philosopher. [*Drinks.*

Hard. Good, very good, thank you; ha! ha! Your generalship puts me in mind of Prince Eugene, when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade. You shall hear.

Mar. Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I think it's almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper?

Hard. For supper, sir? [*Aside.*] Was ever such a request to a man in his own house!

Mar. Yes, sir, supper, sir; I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make devilish work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

Hard. [*Aside.*] Such a brazen dog sure never my eyes beheld. [*To* MARLOW.] Why, really sir, as for supper, I can't well tell. My Dorothy and the cook-maid settle these things between them. I leave these kind of things entirely to them.

Mar. You do, do you?

Hard. Entirely. By-the-bye, I believe they are in actual consultation upon what's for supper this moment in the kitchen.

Mar. Then I beg they'll admit me as one of their privy council. It's a way I have got. When I travel, I always chuse to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence, I hope, sir?

Hard. O no, sir, none in the least: yet I don't

know how; our Bridget, the cook-maid, is not very communicative upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

Hast. Let's see the list of the larder then. I ask it as a favour. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

Mar. [*To* HARDCASTLE, *who looks at them with surprise.*] Sir, he's very right, and it's my way too.

Hard. Sir, you have a right to command here. Here, Roger, bring us the bill of fare for to-night's supper. I believe it's drawn out. Your manner, Mr Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, Colonel Gunthorp. It was a saying of his, that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it.

Enter ROGER.

Hast. [*Aside.*] All upon the high ropes! His uncle a colonel—we shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of the peace. But let's hear the bill of fare.

Mar. [*Perusing.*] What's here? For the first course, for the second course, for the dessert! The devil, sir, do you think we have brought down the whole joiner's company, or the corporation of Bedford? two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

Hast. But let's hear it.

Mar. [Reading.] *For the first course at the top, a pig's face and prune sauce.*

Hast. Damn your pig, I say.

Mar. Damn your prune sauce, say I.

Hard. And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig, with prune sauce, is very good eating. But, gentlemen, you are my guests, make what alterations you please. Is there any thing else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen?

Mar. Why, really sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite, that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please. So much for supper. And

now to see that our beds are aired, and properly taken care of.

Hard. I entreat you'll leave all that to me. You shall not stir a step.

Mar. Leave that to you! I protest, sir, you must excuse me, I always look to these things myself.

Hard. I must insist, sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head.

Mar. You see I'm resolved on it. [*Aside.*] A very troublesome fellow this, as ever I met with.

Hard. Well, sir, I'm resolved at least to attend you. [*Aside.*] This may be modern modesty, but I never saw any thing look so like old-fashioned impudence.

[*Exeunt* MARLOW *and* HARDCASTLE.

Hast. So, I find this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry at those assiduities which are meant to please him? Ha! what do I see! Miss Neville, by all that's happy!

Enter Miss NEVILLE.

Miss Nev. Hastings? To what unexpected good fortune, to what accident, am I to ascribe this happy meeting?

Hast. Let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dearest Constance at an inn.

Miss Nev. An inn! Sure you mistake! my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think this house an inn?

Hast. My friend, Mr Marlow, with whom I came down, and I, have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow, whom we accidentally met at a house hard by, directed us hither.

Miss Nev. Certainly it must be one of my hopeful cousin's tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often; ha! ha! ha! ha!

Hast. He whom your aunt intends for you? He of whom I have such just apprehensions?

Miss Nev. You have nothing to fear from him, I assure you. You'd adore him if you knew how hear-

tily he despises me. My aunt knows it too, and has undertaken to court me for him, and actually begins to think she has made a conquest

Hast. You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here, to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with the journey, but they'll soon be refreshed; and then, if my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we shall soon be out of their power.

Miss Nev. I have often told you, that, though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by my uncle, the India director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I'm very near succeeding. The instant they are put into my possession you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours.

Hast. Perish the baubles! Your person is all I desire. In the mean time, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake. I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house before our plan was ripe for execution.

Miss Nev But how shall we keep him in the deception? Miss Hardcastle is just returned from walking; what if we persuade him she is come to this house as to an inn? This way.

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. The assiduities of these good people tease me beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners to leave me alone, and so he claps not only himself but his old-fashioned wife on my back. They talk of coming to sup with us too; and then, I suppose, we are to run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family—What have we got here?——

Hast. My dear Charles! Let me congratulate you

—the most fortunate accident!—Who do you think is just alighted?

Mar. Cannot guess.

Hast. Our mistresses, boy, Miss Hardcastle and Miss Neville. Give me leave to introduce Miss Constance Neville to your acquaintance. Happening to dine in the neighbourhood, they called on their return to take fresh horses here. Miss Hardcastle has just stept into the next room, and will be back in an instant. Wasn't it lucky, eh?

Mar. [*Aside.*] I have just been mortified enough of all conscience, and here comes something to complete my embarrassment.

Hast. Well, but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in the world?

Mar. O yes, very fortunate—a most joyful encounter!——But our dresses, George, you know, are in disorder——What if we should postpone the happiness till to-morrow?——To-morrow at her own house——It will be every bit as convenient—And rather more respectful——To-morrow let it be.

[*Offering to go.*

Miss Nev. By no means, sir. Your ceremony will displease her. The disorder of your dress will show the ardour of your impatience. Besides, she knows you are in the house, and will permit you to see her.

Mar. O, the devil! how shall I support it? Hem! hem! Hastings, you must not go. You are to assist me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridiculous.

Hast. Pshaw, man! it's but the first plunge, and all's over. She's but a woman, you know.

Mar. And of all women, she that I dread most to encounter.

Enter Miss Hardcastle *as returning from walking, a Bonnet, &c.*

Hast. [*Introducing them.*] Miss Hardcastle, Mr Marlow. I'm proud of bringing two persons of such

merit together, that only want to know, to esteem, each other.

Miss Hard. [*Aside.*] Now for meeting my modest gentleman. [*After a Pause, in which he appears very uneasy and disconcerted.*] I'm glad of your safe arrival, sir—I'm told you had some accidents by the way.

Mar. Only a few, madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, madam, a good many accidents, but should be sorry—madam—or rather glad of any accidents—that are so agreeably concluded. Hem!

Hast. [*To* MARLOW.] You never spoke better in your whole life. Keep it up, and I'll insure you the victory.

Miss Hard. I'm afraid you flatter, sir. You that have seen so much of the finest company can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of the country.

Mar. [*Gathering courage.*] I have lived, indeed, in the world, madam; but I have kept very little company. I have been but an observer upon life, madam, while others were enjoying it.

Hast. [*To* MARLOW.] Cicero never spoke better. Once more, and you are confirmed in assurance for ever.

Mar. [*To* HASTINGS.] Hem! Stand by me then, and when I'm down, throw in a word or two to set me up again.

Miss Hard. An observer, like you, upon life, were, I fear, disagreeably employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approve.

Mar. Pardon me, madam, I was always willing to be amused. The folly of most people is rather an object of mirth than uneasiness.

Hast. [*To* MARLOW.] Bravo, bravo! never spoke so well in your whole life. Well, Miss Hardcastle, I see, that you and Mr Marlow are going to be very good company I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview.

Mar. Not in the least, Mr Hastings. We like your company of all things. [*To* HASTINGS.] Zounds! George, sure you won't go! How can you leave us?

Hast. Our presence will but spoil conversation; so we'll retire to the next room. [*To* MARLOW.] You don't consider, man, that we are to manage a little tete-a-tete of our own. [*Exeunt.*

Mar. What the devil shall I do? will you please to be seated, madam? I say, ma'am—

Miss Hard. Sir!—

Mar. I am afraid, ma'am, I am not so happy as to make myself agreeable to the ladies——

Miss Hard. The ladies, I should hope, have employed some part of your addresses.

Mar. [*Relapsing into Timidity.*] Pardon me, madam, I—I—I—as yet have studied—only—to—deserve them.

Miss Hard. And that, some say, is the very worst way to obtain them.

Mar. Perhaps so, madam. But I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex ——But I'm afraid I grow tiresome.

Miss Hard. Not at all, sir; there is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself; I could hear it for ever. Indeed I have often been surprised how a man of sentiment could ever admire those light airy pleasures, where nothing reaches the heart.

Mar. It's——a diseasc——of the mind, madam. In the variety of tastes there must be some who, wanting a relish——for——um—a—um.

Miss Hard. I understand you, sir. There must be some who, wanting a relish for refined pleasures, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting.

Mar. My meaning, madam, but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing——a——

Miss Hard. [*Aside.*] Who could ever suppose this gentleman impudent upon some occasions! [*To* MARLOW.] You were going to observe, sir—

Mar. I was observing, madam——I protest, madam, I forget what I was going to observe.

Miss Hard. [*Aside.*] I vow and so do I. [*To* MAR.] You were observing, sir, that in this age of hypocrisy —something about hypocrisy, sir.

Mar. Yes, madam. In this age of hypocrisy there are few who upon strict enquiry do not—a—a—a—

Miss Hard. I understand you perfectly, sir.

Mar. [*Aside.*] Egad! and that's more than I do myself.

Miss Hard. You mean, that in this hypocritical age there are few who do not condemn in public what they practise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

Mar. True, madam; those who have most virtue in their mouths, have least of it in their bosoms. But I'm sure I tire you, madam.

Miss Hard. Not in the least, sir; there's something so agreeable and spirited in your manner, such life and force—Pray, sir, go on.

Mar. Yes, madam, I was saying——But I see Miss Neville expecting us in the next room. I would not intrude for the world.

Miss Hard. I protest, sir, I never was more agreeably entertained in all my life.

Mar. But she beckons us to join her. Madam, shall I do myself the honour to attend you?

Miss Hard. Well then, I'll follow. [*Exit* MARLOW.]——Ha! ha! ha! ha! Was there ever such a sober sentimental interview! I'm certain he scarce looked in my face the whole time. Yet the fellow, but for his unaccountable bashfulness, is pretty well too. He has good sense, but then so buried in his fears, that it fatigues one more than ignorance. If I could teach him a little confidence, it would be doing somebody that I know of a piece of service. But who is that somebody?—that, faith, is a question I can scarce answer. [*Exit.*

Enter TONY *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Tony. What do you follow me for, cousin Con? I wonder you're not ashamed to be so very engaging.

Miss Nev. I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame.

Tony. Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me though; but it won't do. I tell you, cousin Con, it won't do, so I beg you'll keep your distance, I want no nearer relationship.

[*She follows coquetting him to the Back Scene.*

Enter MRS HARDCASTLE *and* HASTINGS.

Mrs Hard. Well, I vow, Mr Hastings, you are very entertaining. There's nothing in the world I love to talk of so much as London, and the fashions, though I was never there myself.

Hast. Never there! You amaze me! From your air and manner, I concluded you had been bred all your life either at Ranelagh, St James's, or Tower Wharf.

Mrs Hard. O, sir, you're only pleased to say so. We country persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighbouring rustics; but who can have a manner that has never seen the Pantheon, the Grotto Gardens, the Borough, and such places where the nobility chiefly resort? All I can do, is to enjoy London at second-hand. I take care to know every tete-a-tete from the Scandalous Magazine, and have all the fashions, as they come out, in a letter from the two Miss Rickets of Crooked-lane. Pray how do you like this head, Mr Hastings?

Hast. Extremely elegant and degagée, upon my word, madam. Your friseur is a Frenchman, I suppose?

Mrs Hard. I protest I dressed it myself from a print in the ladies' memorandum book for the last year.

Hast. Indeed! Such a head in a side-box, at the playhouse, would draw as many gazers as my Lady Mayoress at a city ball.

Mrs Hard. I vow, since inoculation began, there is no such thing to be seen as a plain woman; so one must dress a little particular, or one may escape in the crowd.

Hast. But that can never be your case, madam, in any dress. [*Bowing*

Mrs Hard. Yet, what signifies my dressing, when I have such a piece of antiquity by my side as Mr Hardcastle? all I can say will not argue down a single button from his clothes. I have often wanted him to throw off his great flaxen wig, and where he was bald, to plaster it over, like Captain Pately, with powder.

Hast. You are right, madam; for, as among the ladies, there are none ugly, so among the men, there are none old.

Mrs Hard. But what do you think his answer was? Why, with his usual gothic vivacity, he said, I only wanted him to throw off his wig to convert it into a tete for my own wearing.

Hast. Intolerable! At your age you may wear what you please, and it must become you.

Mrs Hard. Pray, Mr Hastings, what do you take to be the most fashionable age about town?

Hast. Some time ago, forty was all the mode; but I'm told the ladies intend to bring up fifty for the ensuing winter.

Mrs Hard. Seriously! Then I shall be too young for the fashion.

Hast. No lady begins now to put on jewels till she's past forty. For instance, miss there, in a polite circle, would be considered as a child, a mere maker of samplers.

Mrs Hard. And yet my niece thinks herself as

much a woman, and is as fond of jewels, as the oldest of us all.

Hast. Your niece, is she? And that young gentleman, a brother of yours, I should presume?

Mrs Hard. My son, sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They quarrel and make it up again ten times a day, as if they were man and wife already. [*To them.*] Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you saying to your cousin Constance this evening?

Tony I have been saying no soft things; but that it's very hard to be followed about so. Ecod! I've not a place in the house now that's left to myself but the stable.

Mrs Hard Never mind him, Con, my dear. He's in another story behind your back.

Miss Nev. There's something generous in my cousin's manner. He falls out before faces to be forgiven in private.

Tony. That's a damned confounded—crack.

Mrs Hard. For shame, Tony. You a man, and behave so!

Tony. If I'm a man, let me have my fortin. Ecod! I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs Hard. Is this, ungrateful boy, all that I'm to get for the pains I have taken in your education? Did not I work that waistcoat and those ruffles to make you look like a gentleman?

Tony. Ecod! I tell you, I'll not be made a fool of no longer

Mrs Hard. Wasn't it all for your good, viper? Wasn't it all for your good?

Tony. I wish you'd let me and my good alone then. Snubbing this way, when I'm in spirits. If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself; not to keep dinging it, dinging it into one so.

Mrs Hard. That's false; I never see you when you're in spirits. No, Tony, you then go to the ale-

house or kennel. I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable, wild notes, unfeeling monster!

Tony. Ecod! mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

Mrs Hard. Was ever the like! But I see he wants to break my heart, I see he does.

Hast. Dear madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a little. I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

Mrs Hard. Well! I must retire. Come, Constance, my love. You see, Mr Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation: Was ever poor woman so plagued with a dear, sweet, pretty, provoking, undutiful boy!

[*Exeunt* MRS HARDCASTLE *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Tony. Don't mind her, let her cry. It's the comfort of her heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book for an hour together, and they said they liked the book the better the more it made them cry.

Hast. Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentleman?

Tony. That's as I find 'um.

Hast. Not to her of your mother's chusing, I dare answer? and yet she appears to be a pretty well-tempered girl.

Tony. That's because you don't know her as well as I. Ecod! I know every inch about her; and there's not a more bitter cantanckerous toad in all Christendom.

Hast. [*Aside.*] Pretty encouragement this for a lover!

Tony. I have seen her since the height of that. She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket, or a colt the first day's breaking.

Hast. To me she appears sensible and silent.

Tony. Ay, before company. But when she's with her playmates, she's as loud as a hog in a gate.

Hast. Well, but you must allow her a little beauty.—Yes, you must allow her some beauty.

Tony. Bandbox! She's all a made-up thing, mun. Ah! could you but see Bet Bouncer of these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod! she has two eyes as black as sloes, and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit cushion. She'd make two of she.

Hast. Well, what say you to a friend, that would take this bitter bargain off your hands?

Tony. Anon?

Hast. Would you thank him, that would take Miss Neville, and leave you to happiness and your dear Betsey?

Tony. Ay; but where is there such a friend, for who would take her?

Hast. I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to whip her off to France, and you shall never hear more of her.

Tony. Assist you! Ecod I will, to the last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair of horses to your chaise, that shall trundle you off in a twinkling, and may be get you a part of her fortin beside, in jewels, that you little dream of.

Hast. My dear 'Squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

Tony. Come along then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you have done with me.

[*Exeunt.*—TONY *singing.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Room in HARDCASTLE'S *House.*

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. What could my old friend, Sir Charles, mean by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town? To me he appears the most impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy chair by the fireside already. He took off his boots in the parlour, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter —She will certainly be shocked at it.

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE, *plainly dressed.*

Well, my Kate, I see you have changed your dress as I bid you: and yet, I believe, there was no great occasion.

Miss Hard. I find such a pleasure, sir, in obeying your commands, that I take care to observe them without ever debating their propriety.

Hard. And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my modest gentleman to you as a lover to-day.

Miss Hard. You taught me to expect something extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description.

Hard. I was never so surprised in my life! He has quite confounded all my faculties!

Miss Hard. I never saw any thing like it: And a man of the world too!

Hard. Ay, he learned it all abroad.—What a fool was I, to think a young man could learn modesty by travelling. He might as soon learn wit at a masquerade.

Miss Hard. It seems all natural to him.

Hard. A good deal assisted by bad company and a French dancing-master.

Miss Hard. Sure you mistake, papa! a French dancing-master could never have taught him that timid look—that awkward address—that bashful manner——

Hard. Whose look? whose manner, child?

Miss Hard. Mr Marlow's: his mauvaise honte, his timidity, struck me at the first sight.

Hard. Then your first sight deceived you; for I think him one of the most brazen first-sights that ever astonished my senses.

Miss Hard. Sure, sir, you rally? I never saw any one so modest.

Hard. And can you be serious! I never saw such a bouncing swaggering puppy, since I was born. Bully Dawson was but a fool to him.

Miss Hard. Surprising! He met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

Hard. He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that froze me to death.

Miss Hard. He treated me with diffidence and respect; censured the manners of the age; admired the prudence of girls that never laughed; tired me with apologies for being tiresome; then left the room with a bow, and, Madam, I would not for the world detain you;

Hard. He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before. Asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer. Interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun, and when I was talking of the Duke of Marlborough and my friend Bruce, he asked if I had not a good hand at making punch. Yes, Kate, he ask'd your father if he was a maker of punch!

Miss Hard. One of us must certainly be mistaken.

Hard. In one thing however we are agreed—to reject him.

Miss Hard. Yes. But upon conditions. For if you should find him less impudent, and I more presuming; if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate——I don't know——the man is well enough for a man—Certainly he has a very passable complexion.

Hard. If we should find him so——But that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business; I'm seldom deceived in that.

Miss Hard. Then as one of us must be mistaken, what if we go to make further discoveries?

Hard. Agreed. But depend on't I'm in the right.

Miss Hard. And depend on't I'm not much in the wrong. [*Exeunt.*

Enter TONY, *running in with a Casket.*

Tony. Ecod! I have got them. Here they are. My cousin Con's necklaces, bobs and all. My mother sha'n't cheat the poor souls out of their fortin neither. O, my genus, is that you?

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother? I hope you have amused her with pretending love for your cousin, and that you are willing to be reconciled at last? we shall be ready to set off in a short time.

Tony. And here's something to bear your charges by the way. [*Giving a Casket.*] Your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them, and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them.

Hast But how have you procured them from your mother?

Tony. Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs. I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the alehouse so often as I do? An honest man may rob himself of his own at any time.

Hast. Thousands do it every day. But to be plain with you; Miss Neville is endeavouring to procure them from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way at least of obtaining them.

Tony. Well, keep them, till you know how it will be. But I know how it will be well enough, she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head.

Hast. But I dread the effects of her resentment, when she finds she has lost them.

Tony. Never you mind her resentment, leave me to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker. Zounds! here they are. Morrice. Prance. [*Exit* HASTINGS.

Enter MRS HARDCASTLE *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Mrs Hard Indeed, Constance, you amaze me; such a girl as you want jewels! It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, twenty years hence, when your beauty begins to want repairs.

Miss Nev. But what will repair beauty at forty, will certainly improve it at twenty, madam.

Mrs Hard. Yours, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my Lady

Kill-day-light, and Mrs Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town, and bring nothing but paste and marcasites back?

Miss Nev. But who knows, madam, but somebody that shall be nameless would like me best with all my little finery about me?

Mrs Hard. Consult your glass, my dear, and then see if, with such a pair of eyes, you want any better sparklers. What do you think, Tony, my dear, does your cousin Con want any jewels, in your eyes, to set off her beauty?

Tony. That's as thereafter may be.

Miss Nev. My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me.

Mrs Hard. A parcel of old-fashion'd rose and table-cut things. They would make you look like the court of King Solomon at a puppet-show. Besides, I believe I can't readily come at them. They may be missing for aught I know to the contrary.

Tony. [*Apart to* MRS HARD.] Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she's so longing for them? Tell her they're lost. It's the only way to quiet her. Say they are lost, and call me to bear witness.

Mrs Hard. [*Apart to* TONY.] You know, my dear, I'm only keeping them for you. So, if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you? He! he! he!

Tony. Never fear me. Ecod! I'll say I saw them taken out with my own eyes.

Miss Nev. I desire them but for a day, madam. Just to be permitted to show them as relics, and then they may be locked up again.

Mrs Hard. To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them, you should have them. They're missing, I assure you. Lost, for aught I know; but we must have patience wherever they are.

Miss Nev. I'll not believe it; this is but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they're too valuable to be so slightly kept, and as you are to answer for the loss——

Mrs Hard. Don't be alarmed, Constance. If they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they're missing, and not to be found.

Tony. That I can bear witness to. They are missing, and not to be found, I'll take my oath on't.

Mrs Hard. You must learn resignation, my dear; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am.

Miss Nev. Ay, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

Mrs Hard. Now, I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them; and, in the mean time, you shall make use of my garnets till your jewels be found.

Miss Nev. I detest garnets.

Mrs Hard. The most becoming things in the world to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they looked upon me. You shall have them. [*Exit.*

Miss Nev. I dislike them of all things. You sha'n't stir—Was ever any thing so provoking, to mislay my own jewels, and force me to wear trumpery!

Tony. Don't be a fool. If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark, he'll tell you more of the matter. Leave me to manage her.

Miss Nev. My dear cousin!

Tony. Vanish. She's here, and has missed them already. Zounds! how she fidgets and spits about like a Catharine wheel!

Enter MRS HARDCASTLE.

Mrs Hard. Confusion! thieves! robbers! We are cheated, plundered, broke open, undone.

Tony. What's the matter, what's the matter, mamma? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family!

Mrs Hard. We are robbed. My bureau has been broke open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone.

Tony. Oh! is that all? Ha! ha! ha! By the laws, I never saw it better acted in my life. Ecod, I thought you was ruin'd in earnest, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs Hard. Why, boy, I am ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broke open, and all taken away.

Tony. Stick to that; ha! ha! ha! stick to that; I'll bear witness, you know; call me to bear witness.

Mrs Hard. I tell you, Tony, by all that's precious the jewels are gone, and I shall be ruin'd for ever.

Tony. Sure I know they're gone, and I am to say so.

Mrs Hard. My dearest Tony, but hear me. They're gone, I say.

Tony. By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh, ha! ha! I know who took them well enough, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs Hard. Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest! I tell you I'm not in jest, booby.

Tony. That's right, that's right: You must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone.

Mrs Hard. Was there ever such a cross-grain'd brute, that won't hear me! Can you bear witness that you're no better than a fool? Was ever poor wo-

man so beset with fools on the one hand, and thieves on the other!

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs Hard. Bear witness again, you blockhead you, and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor niece, what will become of her! Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoy'd my distress?

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs Hard. Do you insult me, monster? *I'll teach* you to vex your mother, I will. *Here, thieves, thieves, thieves, thieves!*

[*He runs off, she follows him.*

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE *and* MAID.

Miss Hard. What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn, ha! ha! I don't wonder at his impudence.

Maid. But what is more, madam, the young gentleman, as you passed by in your present dress, ask'd me if you were the barmaid? He mistook you for the barmaid, madam.

Miss Hard. Did he? Then as I live I'm resolved to keep up the delusion. Tell me, Dolly, how do you like my present dress? Don't you think I look something like Cherry in the Beaux Stratagem?

Maid. It's the dress, madam, that every lady wears in the country, but when she visits or receives company.

Miss Hard. And are you sure he does not remember my face or perron?

Maid. Certain of it.

Miss Hard. I vow I thought so; for though we spoke for some time together, yet his fears were such that he never once looked up during the interview.

Maid. But what do you hope from keeping him in his mistake?

Miss Hard. In the first place, I shall be seen, and that is no small advantage to a girl who brings her

face to market. Then I shall perhaps make an acquaintance, and that's no small victory gained over one, who never addresses any but the wildest of her sex. But my chief aim is to take my gentleman off his guard, and, like an invincible champion of romance, examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

Maid. But are you sure you can act your part, and disguise your voice so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person?

Miss Hard. Never fear me. I think I have got the true bar cant—Did your honour call?—Attend the Lion there——Pipes and tobacco for the angel—The Lamb has been outrageous this half hour.

Maid. It will do, madam. But he's here.

[*Exit* MAID.

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. What a bawling in every part of the house! I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my Host and his story. If I fly to the gallery, there we have my Hostess with her courtesy down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself, and now for recollection. [*Walks and muses.*

Miss Hard. Did you call, sir? did your honour call?

Mar. [*Musing.*] As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

Miss Hard. Did your honour call?

[*She still places herself before him, he turning away.*

Mar. No, child. [*Musing.*] Besides, from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

Miss Hard. I am sure, sir, I heard the bell ring.

Mar. No, no. [*Musing.*] I have pleased my father, however, by coming down, and I'll to-morrow please myself by returning.

[*Taking out his Tablets, and perusing.*

Miss Hard. Perhaps the other gentleman called, sir.

Mar. No, no, I tell you. [*Looks full in her Face.*] Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted——I wanted ——I vow, child, you are vastly handsome.

Miss Hard. O la, sir, you'll make one ashamed.

Mar. Never saw a more sprightly malicious eye.—Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you got any of your——a——what d'ye call it, in the house?

Miss Hard. No, sir, we have been out of that these ten days.

Mar. One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of trial, of the nectar of your lips; perhaps I might be disappointed in that too.

Miss Hard. Nectar! nectar! that's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We keep no French wines here, sir.

Mar. Of true English growth, I assure you.

Miss Hard. Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

Mar. Eighteen years! Why one would think, child, you kept the bar before you were born. How old are you?

Miss Hard. O, sir, I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated.

Mar. To guess at this distance you can't be much above forty. [*Approaching.*] Yet nearer, I don't think so much. [*Approaching.*] By coming close to some women they look younger still; but when we come very close indeed—— [*Attempting to kiss her.*

Miss Hard. Pray, sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age as they do horses, by mark of mouth.

Mar. I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can be ever acquainted?

Miss Hard. And who wants to be acquainted with you? I want no such acquaintance, not I. I'm sure

you did not treat Miss Hardcastle in this obstropalous manner. I'll warrant me, before her you looked dashed, and kept bowing to the ground, and talked for all the world as if you was before a justice of the peace.

Mar. [*Aside.*] Egad! she has hit it, sure enough. [*To* Miss Hardcastle.] In awe of her, child? Ha! ha! ha! A mere awkward, squinting thing; no, no, I find you don't know me. I laughed, and rallied her a little; but I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe, curse me!

Miss Hard. Oh! then, sir, you are a favourite, I find, among the ladies?

Mar. Yes, my dear, a great favourite; and yet hang me, I don't see what they find in me to follow. At the ladies' club in town, I'm called their agreeable Rattle. Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Jenkins Mr Jenkins, my dear, at your service. [*Offering to salute her.*

Miss Hard. Hold, sir; you were introducing me to your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favourite there you say?

Mar. Yes, my dear. There's Mrs Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Cog, Mrs Longhorns, old Miss Biddy Buckskin, and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

Miss Hard. Then it's a very merry place, I suppose?

Mar. Yes, as merry as cards, suppers, wine, and old women can make us.

Miss Hard. And their agreeable Rattle, ha! ha! ha!

Mar. [*Aside.*] Egad! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks.—You laugh, child?

Miss Hard. I can't but laugh, to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

Mar. [*Aside.*] All's well, she don't laugh at me. [*To* Miss Hardcastle.] Do you ever work, child?

Miss Hard. Ay, sure. There's not a screen or a

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quilt in the whole house but what can bear witness of that.

Mar. Odso! Then you must shew me your embroidery. I embroider and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work, you must apply to me. [*Seizing her Hand.*

Miss Hard. Ay, but the colours don't look well by candle-light. You shall see all in the morning. [*Struggling.*

Mar. And why not now, my angel?——Pshaw! the Landlord here! My good luck! [*Exit* MARLOW.

Enter HARDCASTLE, *who stands in Surprise.*

Hard. So, madam! so I find this is your modest lover? This is your humble admirer, that kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and only adored at humble distance. Kate, Kate, art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so?

Miss Hard. Never trust me, dear papa, but he's still the modest man I first took him for; you'll be convinced of it as well as I.

Hard. By the hand of my body, I believe his impudence is infectious! Didn't I see him seize your hand? Didn't I see him haul you about like a milkmaid? and now you talk of his respect and his modesty, forsooth!

Miss Hard. But if I shortly convince you of his modesty, that he has only the faults that will pass off with time, and the virtues that will improve with age, I hope you'll forgive him.

Hard. I tell you I'll not be convinced. I am convinced. He has scarcely been three hours in the house, and he has already encroached on all my prerogatives.

Miss Hard. Sir, I ask but this night to convince you.

Hard. You shall not have half the time, for I have thoughts of turning him out this very hour.

Miss Hard. Give me that hour then, and I hope to satisfy you.

Hard. Well, an hour let it be then. But I'll have no trifling with your father. All fair and open, do you mind me?

Miss Hard. I hope, sir, you have ever found, that I considered your commands as my pride; for your kindness is such, that my duty as yet has been inclination. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Hast. You surprise me! Sir Charles Marlow expected here this night? Where have you had your information?

Miss Nev. You may depend upon it. I just saw his letter to Mr Hardcastle, in which he tells him he intends setting out a few hours after his son.

Hast. Then, my Constance, all must be completed before he arrives. He knows me; and should he find me here, would discover my name, and perhaps my designs, to the rest of the family.

Miss Nev. The jewels, I hope, are safe?

Hast. Yes, yes. I have sent them to Marlow, who

keeps the keys of our baggage. In the mean time, I'll go to prepare matters for our elopement.

Miss Nev. Well! success attend you! [*Exeunt.*

Enter MARLOW, *followed by a* SERVANT.

Mar. I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach at an inn door. Have you deposited the casket with the Landlady, as I ordered you? Have you put it into her own hands?

Serv. Yes, your honour.

Mar. She said she'd keep it safe, did she?

Serv. Yes, she said she'd keep it safe enough; she asked me how I came by it? and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

Mar. Ha! ha! ha! They're safe however. What an unaccountable set of beings have we got amongst! This little barmaid though runs in my head most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family: she's mine, she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. Marlow here, and in spirits too!

Mar. Give me joy, George! Crown me, shadow me with laurels! Well, George, after all, we modest fellows don't want for success among the women.

Hast. Some women you mean. But what success has your honour's modesty been crowned with now, that it grows so insolent upon us?

Mar. Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lively little thing that runs about the house with a bunch of keys to its girdle?

Hast. Well! and what then?

Mar. She's mine, you rogue you. Such fire, such

motion, such eyes, such lips——but, egad! she would not let me kiss them though.

Hast. But are you sure, so very sure of her?

Mar. Why, man, she talked of showing me her work above stairs, and I'm to approve the pattern.

Hast. But how can you, Charles, go about to rob a woman of her honour?

Mar. Pshaw! Pshaw! We all know the honour of the barmaid of an inn. I don't intend to rob her, take my word for it; there's nothing in this house I sha'n't honestly pay for.

Hast. I believe the girl has virtue.

Mar. And if she has, I should be the last man in the world that would attempt to corrupt it.

Hast. You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up? It's in safety?

Mar. Yes, yes. It's safe enough. I have taken care of it. But how could you think the seat of a post-coach at an inn door a place of safety? Ah? numbskull! I have taken better precautions for you than you did for yourself——I have——

Hast. What!

Mar. I have sent it to the Landlady to keep for you.

Hast. To the Landlady!

Mar. The Landlady.

Hast. You did?

Mar. I did. She's to be answerable for its forthcoming, you know.

Hast. Yes, she'll bring it forth, with a witness.

Mar. Wasn't I right? I believe you'll allow, that I acted prudently upon this occasion?

Hast. [*Aside.*] He must not see my uneasiness.

Mar. You seem a little disconcerted though, me thinks. Sure nothing has happened!

Hast. No, nothing. Never was in better spirits in all my life. And so you left it with the Landlady, who, no doubt, very readily undertook the charge?

Mar. Rather too readily. For she not only kept the casket, but through her great precaution, was going to keep the messenger too. Ha! ha! ha!

Hast. Ha! ha! ha! They're safe however.

Mar. As a guinea in a miser's purse.

Hast. [*Aside.*] So now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must set off without it. [*To* MARLOW.] Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations on the pretty barmaid, and, ha! ha! ha! if you are as successful for yourself as you have been for me—

Mar. What then?

Hast. Why then I wish you joy with all my heart. [*Exit.*

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsy-turvy. His servants have got drunk already. I'll bear it no longer;—and yet, from my respect for his father, I'll be calm. [*To* MARLOW.] Mr Marlow, your servant. I'm your very humble servant. [*Bowing low.*

Mar. Sir, your humble servant. [*Aside.*] What's to be the wonder now?

Hard. I believe, sir, you must be sensible, sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, sir; I hope you think so?

Mar. I do from my soul, sir. I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome wherever he goes.

Hard. I believe you do, from my soul, sir. But though I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants is insufferable. Their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

Mar. I protest, my very good sir, that's no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought they are to blame. I ordered them not to spare the cellar.—

I did, I assure you. [*To the Side Scene.*] Here, let one of my servants come up. [*To* HARDCASTLE.] My positive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

Hard. Then they had your orders for what they do! I'm satisfied!

Mar. They had, I assure you. You shall hear from one of themselves.

Enter SERVANT, *drunk.*

You, Jeremy, come forward, sirrah! what were my orders? Were you not told to drink freely, and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the house?

Hard. [*Aside.*] I begin to lose my patience.

Jer. Please your honour, liberty and Fleet Street for ever! Though I am but a servant, I'm as good as another man. I'll drink for no man before supper, sir, damme! Good liquor will sit upon a good supper, but a good supper will not sit upon——hiccup ——upon my conscience, sir. [*Exit.*

Mar. You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he possibly can be; I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor devil soused in a beer-barrel.

Hard. Zounds! He'll drive me distracted if I contain myself any longer. Mr Marlow, sir, I have submitted to your insolence for more than four hours, and I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolved to be master here, sir, and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

Mar. Leave your house!——Sure you jest, my good friend? What, when I'm doing what I can to please you?

Hard. I tell you, sir, you don't please me; so I desire you'll leave my house.

Mar. Sure you cannot be serious? At this time of night, and such a night! You only mean to banter me?

Hard. I tell you, sir, I'm serious; and now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, sir, this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly.

Mar. I sha'n't stir a step, I assure you. [*In a serious Tone.*] This your house, fellow! it's my house. This is my house. Mine while I chuse to stay. What right have you to bid me leave this house, sir? I never met with such impudence, curse me, never in my whole life before.

Hard. Nor I, confound me if ever I did. To come to my house, to call for what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to order his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me, This house is mine, sir. By all that's impudent, it makes me laugh. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, sir, [*Bantering.*] as you take the house, what think you of taking the rest of the furniture? There's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there are a set of prints too. What think you of The Rake's Progress for your own apartment?

Mar. Bring me your bill, I say; and I'll leave you and your infernal house directly.

Hard. Then there's a mahogany table, that you may see your own face in.

Mar. My bill, I say.

Hard I had forgot the great chair, for your own particular slumbers, after a hearty meal.

Mar. Zounds! bring me my bill, I say, and let's hear no more on't.

Hard. Young man, young man, from your father's letter to me, I was taught to expect a well-bred modest man, as a visitor here, but now I find him no better than a coxcomb and a bully; but he will be down here presently, and shall hear more of it.

[*Exit.*

Mar. How's this! Sure I have not mistaken the house! Every thing looks like an inn. The servants cry, Coming. The attendance is awkward; the barmaid too to attend us. But she's here, and will further inform me.—Whither so fast, child? A word with you.

Enter Miss Hardcastle.

Miss Hard. Let it be short then. I'm in a hurry.

Mar. Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what may your business in this house be?

Miss Hard. A relation of the family, sir.

Mar. What? A poor relation?

Miss Hard. Yes, sir. A poor relation appointed to keep the keys, and to see that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

Mar. That is, you act as the barmaid of this inn?

Miss Hard. Inn! O law—What brought that in your head? One of the best families in the county keep an inn! Ha! ha! ha! old Mr Hardcastle's house an inn!

Mar. Mr Hardcastle's house! Is this house Mr Hardcastle's house, child?

Miss Hard. Ay, sure. Whose else should it be?

Mar. So then all's out, and I have been damnably imposed on. O confound my stupid head! I shall be laughed at over the whole town. I shall be stuck up in caricatura in all the print shops,—The Dullissimo Maccaroni! To mistake this house of all others for an inn, and my father's old friend for an innkeeper. What a swaggering puppy must he take me for. What a silly puppy do I find myself. There again, may I be hanged, my dear, but I mistook you for the barmaid.

Miss Hard. Dear me! Dear me! I'm sure there's nothing in my behaviour to put me upon a level with one of that stamp.

Mar. Nothing, my dear, nothing. But I was in for a list of blunders, and could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw every thing the wrong way. I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurement. But it's over—This house I no more show my face in.

Miss Hard. I hope, sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I'm sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite, and said so many civil things to me. I'm sure I should be sorry [*Pretending to cry.*] if he left the family upon my account. I'm sure I should be sorry people said any thing amiss, since I have no fortune but my character.

Mar. [*Aside.*] By Heaven she weeps! This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest woman, and it touches me.

Miss Hard. But I'm sure my family is as good as Miss Hardcastle's, and though I'm poor, that's no great misfortune to a contented mind, and, until this moment, I never thought that it was bad to want fortune.

Mar. And why now, my pretty simplicity?

Miss Hard. Because it puts me at a distance from one, that if I had a thousand pound I would give it all to.

Mar. [*Aside*] This simplicity bewitches me so, that if I stay I'm undone. I must make one bold effort, and leave her. [*To her.*] Your partiality in my favour, my dear, touches me most sensibly; and were I to live for myself alone, I could easily fix my choice. But to be plain with you, the difference of our *birth*, fortune, and education, make an honourable connexion impossible: and I can never harbour a thought of seducing simplicity, that trusted in my honour; or bringing ruin upon one, whose only fault was being too lovely. [*Exit.*

Miss Hard. Generous man! I never knew half his

merit till now. He shall not go, if I have power or art to detain him. I'll still preserve the character in which I stooped to conquer, but will undeceive my papa, who, perhaps, may laugh him out of his resolution. [*Exit.*

Enter TONY *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Tony. Ay, you may steal for yourselves the next time: I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again, that's a sure thing; but she believes it was all a mistake of the servants.

Miss Nev. But, my dear cousin, sure you won't forsake us in this distress. If she in the least suspects that I am going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

Tony. To be sure, aunts of all kinds are damned bad things. But what can I do? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like Whistlejacket, and I'm sure you can't say but I have courted you nicely before her face. Here she comes, we must court a little more, for fear she should suspect us.

[*They retire, and seem to fondle.*

Enter MRS HARDCASTLE.

Mrs Hard. Well, I was greatly fluttered, to be sure. But my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I sha'n't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. But what do I see! Fondling together, as I'm alive! I never saw Tony so sprightly before. Ah! have I caught you, my pretty doves! What, billing, exchanging stolen glances, and broken murmurs, ah!

Tony. As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little now and then, to be sure. But there's no love lost between us.

Mrs Hard. A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter.

Miss Nev. Cousin Tony promises to give us more of his company at home. Indeed he sha'n't leave us any more. It won't leave us, cousin Tony, will it?

Tony. O, it's a pretty creature. No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pound, than leave you when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming.

Miss Nev. Agreeable cousin! who can help admiring that natural humour, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless—[*Patting his Cheek.*] ah it's a bold face.

Mrs Hard. Pretty innocence!

Tony. I'm sure I always loved cousin Con's hazle eyes, and her pretty long fingers, that she twists this way and that, over the haspicholls, like a parcel of bobbins.

Mrs Hard. Ah, he would charm the bird from the tree. I never was so happy before. My boy takes after his father, poor Mr Lumpkin, exactly. The jewels, my dear Con, shall be yours incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear? You shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Dr Drowsey's sermons, till a fitter opportunity.

Enter DIGGORY.

Digg. Where's the 'Squire? I have got a letter for your worship.

Tony. Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

Digg. I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

Tony. Who does it come from?

Digg. Your worship mun ask that of the letter itself.

Tony. I could wish to know, though. [*Turning the Letter, and gazing on it.*]

Miss Nev. [*Aside.*] Undone, undone! A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees it, we are ruined for ever. I'll keep her em-

ployed a little if I can. [*To* Mrs Hardcastle.] But I have not told you, madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr Marlow. We so laughed—You must know, madam—this way a little, for he must not hear us. [*They confer.*

Tony. [*Still gazing.*] A damned cramp piece of penmanship, as ever I saw in my life. I can read your print-hand very well. But here there are such handles, and shanks, and dashes, that one can scarce tell the head from the tail. *To Anthony Lumpkin, Esq.* It's very odd, I can read the outside of my letters, where my own name is, well enough. But when I come to open it, it's all—buzz. That's hard, very hard; for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

Mrs Hard. Ha! ha! ha! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher?

Miss Nev. Yes, madam; but you must hear the rest, madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

Mrs Hard. He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

Tony. [*Still gazing.*] A damned up and-down hand, as if it was disguised in liquor. [*Reading.*] Dear sir, Ay, that's that. Then there's an M, and a T, and an S, but whether the next be an izzard or an R, confound me, I cannot tell.

Mrs Hard. What's that, my dear? Can I give you any assistance?

Miss Nev. Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. [*Twitching the Letter from her.*] Do you know who it is from?

Tony. Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger the feeder.

Miss Nev. Ay, so it is, [*Pretending to read.*] "Dear 'Squire. Hoping that you're in health, as I am at this present. The gentlemen of the Shake-bag club has cut the gentlemen of the Goose-green quite out of

feather. The odds—um—odd battle——um—long fighting—um"—Here, here, it's all about cocks, and fightings; it's of no consequence,—here, put it up, put it up. [*Thrusting the crumpled Letter upon him.*]

Tony. But I tell you, miss, it's of all the consequence in the world. I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea. Here, mother, do you make it out. Of no consequence!

[*Giving* MRS HARDCASTLE *the Letter.*

Mrs Hard. How's this! [Reads.] *Dear 'Squire, I am now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden, but I find my horses yet unable to perform their journey. I expect you'll assist us with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Dispatch is necessary, as the hag* (ay the hag) *your mother will otherwise suspect us. Your's,*

HASTINGS.

Grant me patience! I shall run distracted! My rage chokes me!

Miss Nev. I hope, madam, you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence, or sinister design, that belongs to another.

Mrs Hard. [*Courtesying very low.*] Fine spoken madam, you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of courtesy and circumspection, madam! [*Changing her Tone.*] And you, you great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut—were you too joined against me? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment. As for you, madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready, it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare, this very moment, to run off with me. Your old aunt Pedigree will keep you secure, I'll warrant me. You too, sir, may mount your horse, and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory! I'll show you, that I wish you better than you do yourselves. [*Exit,*

Miss Nev. So, now I'm completely ruined.

Tony. Ay, that's a sure thing.

Miss Nev. What better could be expected from being connected with such a stupid fool, and after all the nods and signs I made him!

Tony By the laws, miss, it was your own cleverness, and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so nice and so busy with your Shake-bags, and Goose-greens, that I thought you could never be making believe.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. So, sir, I find by my servant, that you have shown my letter, and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman?

Tony. Here's another. Ask Miss there who betrayed you. Ecod, it was her doing, not mine.

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. So, I have been finely used here among you. Rendered contemptible, driven into ill-manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

Tony Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

Miss Nev. And there, sir, is the gentleman, to whom we all owe every obligation.

Mar. What can I say to him, a mere booby, an idiot, whose ignorance and age are a protection.

Hast. A poor contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction.

Miss Nev. Yet with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with all our embarrassments.

Hast. An insensible cub!

Mar. Replete with tricks and mischief.

Tony. Baw! damme, but I'll fight you both one after the other——with baskets.

Mar. As for him, he's below resentment. But your conduct, Mr Hastings, requires an explanation.

You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

Hast. Tortured as I am with my own disappointments, is this a time for explanations? It is not friendly, Mr Marlow.

Mar. But, sir——

Miss Nev. Mr Marlow, we never kept on your mistake, till it was too late to undeceive you. Be pacified.

Enter DIGGORY.

Digg. My mistress desires you'll get ready immediately, madam. The horses are putting to. Your hat and things are in the next room. We are to go thirty miles before morning. [*Exit.*

Miss Nev. Well, well; I'll come presently. O, Mr Marlow! if you knew what a scene of constraint and ill-nature lies before me, I'm sure it would convert your resentment into pity

Mar. I'm so distracted with a variety of passions, that I don't know what I do. Forgive me, madam. George, forgive me. You know my hasty temper, and should not exasperate it.

Hast. The torture of my situation is my only excuse.

Miss Nev. Well, my dear Hastings, if you have that esteem for me that I think, that I am sure, you have, your constancy for three years will but increase the happiness of our future connexion. If——

Mrs Hard. [*Within.*] Miss Neville, Constance, why, Constance, I say.

Miss Nev. I'm coming. Well, constancy. Remember, constancy is the word. [*Exit.*

Mar. [*To* TONY.] You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. What might be amusement to you, is here disappointment, and even distress.

Tony. [*From a Reverie.*] Ecod, I have hit it. It's here. Your hands. Yours, and yours, my poor

Sulky. My boots there, ho! Meet me two hours hence at the bottom of the garden; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin a more good-natured fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse, and Bet Bouncer into the bargain. [*Exeunt*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

A Room in HARDCASTLE'S *House.*

Enter SIR CHARLES MARLOW *and* HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Ha! ha! ha! The peremptory tone in which he sent forth his sublime commands!

Sir Char. And the reserve with which I suppose he treated all your advances!

Hard. And yet he might have seen something in me above a common innkeeper, too.

Sir Char. Yes, Dick, but he mistook you for an uncommon innkeeper, ha! ha! ha!

Hard. Well, I'm in too good spirits to think of any thing but joy. Yes, my dear friend, this union of our families will make our personal friendships hereditary; and though my daughter's fortune is but small——

Sir Char. Why, Dick, will you talk of fortune to me? My son is possessed of more than a competence

already, and can want nothing but a good and virtuous girl to share his happiness and increase it. If they like each other, as you say they do——

Hard. If, man! I tell you they do like each other. My daughter as good as told me so.

Sir Char. But girls are apt to flatter themselves, you know.

Hard. I saw him grasp her hand in the warmest manner myself; and here he comes to put you out of your ifs, I warrant him.

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. I come, sir, once more, to ask pardon for my strange conduct. I can scarce reflect on my insolence without confusion.

Hard. Tut, boy, a trifle. You take it too gravely. An hour or two's laughing with my daughter will set all to rights again—She'll never like you the worse for it.

Mar. Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

Hard. Approbation is but a cold word, Mr Marlow, if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me?

Mar. Really, sir, I have not that happiness.

Hard. Come, boy, I'm an old fellow, and know what's what, as well as you that are younger. I know what has passed between you; but mum.

Mar. Sure sir, nothing has passed between us but the most profound respect on my side, and the most distant reserve on hers? You don't think, sir, that my impudence has been passed upon all the rest of the family?

Hard. Impudence! No, I don't say that—Not quite impudence—Though girls like to be played with, and rumpled too sometimes. But she has told no tales, [illegible]re you.

Mar. May I die, sir, if I ever——

Hard. I tell you, she don't dislike you; and as I'm sure you like her——

Mar. But why won't you hear me? By all that's just and true, I never gave Miss Hardcastle the slightest mark of my attachment, or even the most distant hint to suspect me of affection. We had but one interview, and that was formal, modest, and uninteresting.

Hard. [*Aside.*] This fellow's formal modest impudence is beyond bearing.

Sir Char. And you never grasp'd her hand, or made any protestations?

Mar. As Heaven is my witness, I came down in obedience to your commands. I saw the lady without emotion, and parted without reluctance. I hope you'll expect no further proofs of my duty, nor prevent me from leaving a house in which I suffer so many mortifications. [*Exit.*

Sir Char. I'm astonish'd at the air of sincerity with which he parted.

Hard. And I'm astonished at the deliberate intrepidity of his assurance.

Sir Char. I dare pledge my life and honour upon his truth.

Hard. Here comes my daughter, and I would stake my happiness upon her veracity.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Kate, come hither, child. Answer us sincerely, and without reserve; has Mr Marlow made you any professions of love and affection?

Miss Hard. The question is very abrupt, sir! But since you require unreserved sincerity, I think he has.

Hard. [*To* SIR CHARLES.] You see.

Sir Char. And pray, madam, have you and my son had more than one interview?

Miss Hard. Yes, sir, several.

Hard. [*To* SIR CHARLES.] You see.

Sir Char. But did he profess any attachment?

Miss Hard. A lasting one.

Sir Char. Did he talk of love?

Miss Hard. Much, sir.

Sir. Char. Amazing! And all this formally?

Miss Hard. Formally.

Hard. Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied.

Sir Char. And how did he behave, madam?

Miss Hard. As most profess'd admirers do. Said some civil things of my face, talked much of his want of merit, and the greatness of mine; mentioned his heart, gave a short tragedy speech, and ended with pretended rapture.

Sir Char. Now I'm perfectly convinced, indeed. I know his conversation among women to be modest and submissive. This forward, canting, ranting manner by no means describes him, and I'm confident he never sat for the picture.

Miss Hard. Then what, sir, if I should convince you to your face of my sincerity? If you and my papa, in about half an hour, will follow my directions, you shall hear him declare his passion to me in person.

Sir Char. Agreed. And if I find him what you describe, all my happiness in him must have an end.

[*Exit.*

Miss Hard. And if you don't find him what I describe—I fear my happiness must never have a beginning. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Back of the Garden.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. What an idiot am I, to wait here for a fellow who probably takes a delight in mortifying me. He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. What do I see? It is he, and perhaps with news of my Constance!

Enter TONY, *booted and spattered.*

My honest 'Squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

Tony. Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world, if you knew but all. This riding by night, by the bye, is cursedly tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.

Hast Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

Tony. Left them? Why, where should I leave them, but where I found them?

Hast. This is a riddle.

Tony. Riddle me this then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house?

Hard. I'm still astray.

Tony. Why, that's it, mun. I have led them astray. By jingo, there's not a pond or slough within five miles of the place but they can tell the taste of.

Hast. Ha! ha! ha! I understand; you took them in a round, while they supposed themselves going forward. And so you have at last brought them home again.

Tony. You shall hear. I first took them down Fea-

ther-bed-lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-down Hill—I then introduced them to the gibbet on Cracksk ull Common, and from that, with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horsepond at the bottom of the garden.

Hast. But no accident, I hope?

Tony. No, no, only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey, and the cattle can scarce crawl. So if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound, that no soul here can budge a foot to follow you.

Hast. My dear friend, how can I be grateful?

Tony. Ay, now it's dear friend, noble 'Squire. Just now, it was all idiot, cub, and run me through the guts. Damn your way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I should be dead, and you might go kiss the hangman.

Hast. The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville; if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one.

[*Exit* HASTINGS.

Tony. Never fear me. Here she comes. Vanish. She's got from the pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.

Enter MRS HARDCASTLE.

Mrs Hard. Oh, Tony, I'm killed. Shook, batter'd to death. I shall never survive it. That last jolt has done my business.

Tony. Alack, mamma, it was all your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

Mrs Hard. I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey

Drench'd in the mud, overturn'd in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way? Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony?

Tony. By my guess we should be upon Heavytree Heath, about forty miles from home.

Mrs Hard. O lud! O lud! the most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

Tony. Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid. Two of the five that kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid. Is that a man that's galloping behind us? No; it's only a tree. Don't be afraid.

Mrs Hard. The fright will certainly kill me.

Tony. Do you see any thing like a black hat moving behind the thicket?

Mrs Hard. O death!

Tony. No, it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mother; don't be afraid.

Mrs Hard. As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah! I'm sure on't. If he perceives us, we are undone.

Tony. [*Aside.*] Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky, come to take one of his night walks!—[*To her.*] Ah, it's a highwayman, with pistols as long as my arm. A damn'd ill-looking fellow.

Mrs Hard. Good Heaven defend us! He approaches.

Tony. Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger, I'll cough and cry hem. When I cough be sure to keep close.

[MRS HARDCASTLE *hides behind a Tree in the back Scene.*

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. I'm mistaken, or I heard voices of people in want of help.—Oh, Tony, is that you? I did not

expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

Tony. Very safe, sir, at my aunt Pedigree's. Hem.

Mrs Hard. [*From behind.*] Ah, death! I find there's danger.

Hard. Forty miles in three hours! sure that's too much, my youngster.

Tony. Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys, as they say. Hem.

Mrs Hard [*From behind.*] Sure he'll do the dear boy no harm!

Hard. But I heard a voice here; I should be glad to know from whence it came.

Tony. It was I, sir, talking to myself, sir. I was saying that forty miles in three hours was very good going. Hem. As to be sure is was. Hem. I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in, if you please. Hem.

Hard. But if you talk'd to yourself, you did not answer yourself. I am certain I heard two voices, and am resolved—[*Raising his Voice.*]—to find the other out.

Mrs Hard. [*Running forward from behind.*] O lud, he'll murder my poor boy, my darling. Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life, but spare that young gentleman, spare my child, if you have any mercy!

Hard. My wife, as I am a Christian! From whence can she come, or what does she mean?

Mrs Hard. [*Kneeling.*] Take compassion on us, good Mr Highwayman! Take our money, our watches, all we have, but spare our lives. We will never bring you to justice, indeed we won't, good Mr Highwayman.

Hard. I believe the woman's out of her senses. What, Dorothy, don't you know me?

Mrs Hard. Mr Hardcastle, as I'm alive! My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected

to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home? What has brought you to follow us?

Hard. Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits? So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door? [*To* TONY.] This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue you.—[*To* MRS HARDCASTLE.] Don't you know the gate, and the mulberry-tree; and don't you remember the horsepond, my dear?

Mrs Hard. Yes, I shall remember the horsepond as long as I live; I have caught my death in it.—[*To* TONY.] And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

Tony. Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

Mrs Hard. I'll spoil you, I will.

[*Follows him off the stage.—Exeunt.*

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Hast. My dear Constance, why will you deliberate thus? If we delay a moment, all is lost for ever. Pluck up a little resolution, and we shall soon be out of the reach of her malignity.

Miss Nev. I find it impossible. My spirits are so sunk with the agitations I have suffered, that I am unable to face any new danger. Two or three years patience will at last crown us with happiness.

Hast. Such a tedious delay is worse than inconstancy. Let us fly, my charmer. Let us date our happiness from this very moment. Perish fortune. Love and content will increase what we possess beyond a monarch's revenue. Let me prevail.

Miss Nev. No, Mr Hastings, no. Prudence once more comes to my relief, and I will obey its dictates. In the moment of passion fortune may be despised, but it ever produces a lasting repentance. I'm resolved to apply to Mr Hardcastle's compassion and justice for redress.

Hast. But though he had the will, he has not the power to relieve you.

Miss Nev. But he has influence, and upon that I am resolved to rely.

Hast. I have no hopes. But since you persist, I must reluctantly obey you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Room in HARDCASTLE'S *House.*

Enter SIR CHARLES MARLOW *and* MISS HARDCASTLE.

Sir Char. What a situation am I in! If what you say appears, I shall then find a guilty son. If what he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.

Miss Hard. I am proud of your approbation, and to show I merit it, if you will conceal yourselves behind that screen, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes.

Sir Char. I'll to your father, and keep him to the appointment. [*Exit* SIR CHARLES.

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave; nor did I, till this moment, know the pain I feel in the separation.

Miss Hard. [*In her own natural Manner.*] I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness, by showing the little value of what you now think proper to regret.

Mar. [*Aside.*] This girl every moment improves upon me.—It must not be, madam. I have already

trifled too long with my heart. My very pride begins to submit to my passion; and nothing can restore me to myself, but this painful effort of resolution.

Miss Hard. Then go, sir. I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as hers you came down to visit, and my education, I hope, not inferior, what are these advantages without equal affluence? I must remain contented with the slight approbation of imputed merit; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune.

Enter HARDCASTLE *and* SIR CHARLES MARLOW, *behind.*

Mar. By Heavens, madam, fortune was never my smallest consideration. Your beauty at first caught my eye; for who could see that without emotion? But every moment that I converse with you, steals in some new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What at first seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence, and conscious virtue. —I am now determined to stay, madam, and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to doubt his approbation.

Miss Hard. No, Mr Marlow; I will not, cannot detain you. Do you think I could suffer a connection, in which there is the smallest room for repentance? Do you think I would take the mean advantage of a transient passion, to load you with confusion? Do you think I could ever relish that happiness, which was acquired by lessening yours? Do you think I could ever catch at the confident addresses of a secure admirer?

Mar. [*Kneeling.*] Does this look like security? Does this look like confidence? No, madam, every

moment that shows me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue——

Sir Char. I can hold it no longer. Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation?

Hard. Your cold contempt; your formal interview? What have you to say now?

Mar. That I'm all amazement! What can it mean?

Hard. It means that you can say and unsay things at pleasure; that you can address a lady in private, and deny it in public; that you have one story for us, and another for my daughter.

Mar. Daughter!—this lady your daughter!

Hard. Yes, sir, my only daughter. My Kate, whose else should she be?

Mar. Oh, the devil!

Miss Hard. Yes, sir, that very identical tall squinting lady you were pleased to take me for. [*Courtesying.*] She that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity, and the bold, forward, agreeable Rattle of the ladies club; ha! ha! ha!

Mar. Zounds! there's no bearing this; it's worse than death.

Miss Hard. In which of your characters, sir, will you give us leave to address you? As the faultering gentleman, with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard, and hates hypocrisy; or the loud confident creature, that keeps it up with Mrs Mantrap, and old Mrs Biddy Buckskin, till three in the morning; ha! ha! ha!

Mar. O, curse on my noisy head! I never attempted to be impudent yet, that I was not taken down. I must be gone.

Hard. By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I am rejoiced to find it. You shall not, sir, I tell you. I know she'll for-

give you. Won't you forgive him, Kate? We'll all forgive you. Take courage, man.

[*They retire, she tormenting him to the back Scene.*

Enter MRS HARDCASTLE *and* TONY.

Mrs Hard. So, so, they're gone off. Let them go, I care not.

Hard. Who gone?

Mrs Hard. My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr Hastings, from town. He who came down with our modest visitor here.

Sir Char. Who, my honest George Hastings? As worthy a fellow as lives, and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice.

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Mrs Hard. [*Aside.*] What, returned so soon? I begin not to like it.

Hast. [*To* HARDCASTLE.] For my late attempt to fly off with your niece, let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back, to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's consent, I first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded on duty.

Hard. I'm glad they are come back to reclaim their due.—Come hither, Tony boy. Do you refuse this lady's hand whom I now offer you?

Tony. What signifies my refusing? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

Hard. While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire to keep it secret; but since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare, you have been of age these three months.

Tony Of age! Am I of age, father?

Hard. Above three months.

Tony. Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. [*Taking* Miss Neville's *Hand.*] Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of Blank-place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constantia Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again.

Sir Char. O brave 'Squire!

Hast. My worthy friend!

Mrs Hard. My dutiful offspring!

Mar. Joy, my dear George, I give you joy sincerely And could I prevail upon my little tyrant here to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive, if you would return me the favour.

Hast. [*To* Miss Hardcastle.] Come, madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you, and you must and shall have him.

Hard. [*Joining their Hands.*] And I say so too. And, Mr Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So, boy, take her; and as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is, that you may never be mistaken in the wife. [*Exeunt.*

THE END.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE

HODGE. ... LORD, YOUR HONOR, LOOK OUT AND SEE WHAT A HUE THEY ... ACT V. SCENE III.

Painted by Singleton. Pub. by Longman & C.ª 1817. Engraved by [illegible]

LOVE IN A VILLAGE;

A COMIC OPERA,

IN THREE ACTS;

By ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
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Printed by James Ballantyne & Co.

REMARKS.

THIS is an opera, in which plot, incident, and character are not subservient to the harmony of sweet sounds; but where sound and sense happily unite, to give entertainment to that taste, which is refined both in the one and the other.

None but a churlish spectator can behold this village group, without sharing in all their various interests and sensations—their family quarrels, petty intrigues, diminutive gallantries, clownish stupidities, rural festivities, sparkling anger, flaming love, and all those freaks of pain, pleasure, or absurdity, which passion deals out in the circle of a village, as well as in the precincts of a metropolis.

"Love in a Village" was first performed in 1763; and is entitled to particular notice, because it has ever since been a favourite opera, and will certainly preserve to future times the station it has obtained upon the English stage.

Bickerstaff, the author, has borrowed part of this production from a work, entitled, the "Village Opera," by Charles Johnstone, and also from the "Gentleman Dancing Master," by Wycherley, one of the most indifferent among that poet's dramas; and

yet to him are present auditors indebted for that very pleasant scene, where Lucinda imposes her lover upon her father in a counterfeit character, with the vain efforts of her aunt to point out the deception.

It is great praise to the author of this opera, that music has neither made his lovers insipid, nor the other characters dull. Young Meadows and Rosetta excite sympathy, and their friends and acquaintance produce mirth; yet, happily, not that species of merriment, which makes an enlightened auditor sigh whilst he laughs.

Justice Woodcock's humour is perfectly natural; and such is likewise the ill humour of his sister, the old maid.

Hawthorn, the rustic sportsman, is nicely distinguished from the coarse, clownish Hodge; and the underplot of Eustace with the Justice's daughter is more amusing than secondary fables generally are; while Madge, forsaken, is a perfect description of the ill-fated state of many a rural servant maid.

The dialogue is easy and appropriate; and if the songs are not distinguished by much poetical skill, they are pleasing through simplicity and rational sentiment.

Perhaps the *denouement* might have been delayed with better effect; for though Sir William Meadows heard of the situation of his son, it was not requisite that he should likewise know Rosetta was in the same house. The fable, thus conducted, the final discovery of events would have been postponed till the conclusion of the piece.

The famed Miss Brent was the original Rosetta; the equally famed Miss Catley succeeded her; and they each enriched the managers, and enraptured their audience, almost as much as Mrs Billington has since done in any of her most favourite characters.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir William Meadows	*Mr Waddy.*
Young Meadows	*Mr Incledon.*
Justice Woodcock	*Mr Munden.*
Hawthorn	*Mr Townsend.*
Eustace	*Mr Claremont.*
Hodge	*Mr Emery.*
Footman	*Mr Platt.*
Carter	*Mr Beverley.*

Country Lads.

Messrs Abbot—L. Bologna—Lee—Odwell—Street—Tett—Thomas—Truman.

Rosetta	*Miss Mortimer.*
Lucinda	*Mrs Atkins.*
Deborah Woodcock	*Mrs Davenport.*
Margery	*Mrs Martyr.*
Cook	*Mr Harley.*
Housemaid	*Mrs Castelle.*

Country Lasses.

Mesdames Benson—Bologna—Blurton—Bennet—Cox—Dibdin, &c.

SCENE—A Village.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Garden.

ROSETTA *and* LUCINDA *are discovered at Work, seated upon Two Garden Chairs.*

AIR I.

Ros. *Hope! thou nurse of young desire,*
Fairy promiser of joy;
Painted vapour, glow-worm fire,
Temp'rate sweet, that ne'er can cloy:

Lucin. *Hope! thou earnest of delight,*
Softest soother of the mind;
Balmy cordial, prospect bright,
Surest friend the wretched find:

Both. *Kind deceiver, flatter still,*
Deal out pleasures unpossest;
With thy dreams my fancy fill,
And in wishes make me blest.

Lucin. Heigho——Rosetta!
Ros. Well, child, what do you say?

Lucin. 'Tis a devilish thing to live in a villa, hundred miles from the capital, with a preposter gouty father, and a superannuated maiden aunt. am heartily sick of my situation.

Ros. And with reason—But 'tis in a great meas your own fault: here is this Mr Eustace, a ma character and family; he likes you, you like h you know one another's minds, and yet you will resolve to make yourself happy with him.

AIR II.

Whence can you inherit
So slavish a spirit?
Confined thus and chain'd to a log!
Now fondled, now chid,
Permitted, forbid:
'Tis leading the life of a dog.

For shame, you a lover!
More firmness discover.
Take courage, nor here longer mope;
Resist and be free,
Run riot like me,
And, to perfect the picture, elope.

Lucin. And this is your advice?

Ros. Positively.

Lucin. Here's my hand; positively I'll follow it—I have already sent to my gentleman, who is now in the country, to let him know he may come hither this day; we will make use of this opportunity to settle all preliminaries—And then—But take notice, whenever we decamp, you march off along with us.

Ros. Oh! madam, your servant; I have no inclination to be left behind, I assure you—But you say you got acquainted with this spark, while you were with your mother, during her last illness at Bath, so that your father has never seen him?

Lucin. Never in his life, my dear; and I am confident he entertains not the least suspicion of my having any such connexion: my aunt indeed, has her doubts and surmises; but, besides that my father will not allow any one to be wiser than himself, it is an established maxim between these affectionate relations, never to agree in any thing.

Ros. Except being absurd; you must allow they sympathize perfectly in that——But, now we are on the subject, I desire to know what I am to do with this wicked old justice of peace, this libidinous father of yours? He follows me about the house, like a tame goat.

Lucin. Nay, I'll assure you he has been a wag in his time—you must have a care of yourself.

Ros. Wretched me! to fall into such hands, who have been just forced to run away from my parents to avoid an odious marriage——You smile at that now; and I know you think me whimsical, as you have often told me; but you must excuse my being a little over delicate in this particular.

AIR III.

My heart's my own, my will is free,
And so shall be my voice;
No mortal man shall wed with me,
Till first he's made my choice.

Let parents rule, cry nature's laws,
And children still obey;
And is there then no saving clause,
Against tyrannic sway?

Lucin. Well, but my dear mad girl——

Ros. Lucinda, don't talk to me—Was your father to go to London, meet there by accident with an old fellow, as wrong-headed as himself, and in a fit of absurd friendship agree to marry you to that old fel-

low's son, whom you had never seen, without consulting your inclinations, or allowing you a negative, in case he should not prove agreeable——

Lucin. Why, I should think it a little hard, I confess—yet, when I see you in the character of a chambermaid——

Ros. It is the only character, my dear, in which I could hope to lie concealed; and I can tell you, I was reduced to the last extremity, when, in consequence of our old boarding-school friendship, I applied to you to receive me in this capacity: for we expected the parties the very next week.

Lucin. But had not you a message from your intended spouse, to let you know he was as little inclined to such ill-concerted nuptials as you were?

Ros. More than so; he wrote to advise me, by all means, to contrive some method of breaking them off, for he had rather return to his dear studies at Oxford; and after that, what hopes could I have of being happy with him?

Lucin. Then you are not at all uneasy at the strange rout you must have occasioned at home? I warrant, during this month you have been absent——

Ros. Oh! don't mention it, my dear; I have had so many admirers since I commenced Abigail, that I am quite charmed with my situation—But hold, who stalks yonder into the yard, that the dogs are so glad to see?

Lucin. Daddy Hawthorn, as I live! He is come to pay my father a visit; and never more luckily, for he always forces him abroad. By the way, what will you do with yourself, while I step into the house to see after my trusty messenger, Hodge?

Ros. No matter; I'll sit down in that arbour, and listen to the singing of the birds: you know I am fond of melancholy amusements.

Lucin. So it seems, indeed: sure, Rosetta, none of

your admirers had p
are not in love, I ho

Ros. In love! that's pleasant: who do you suppose I should be in love with, pray?

Lucin. Why, let me see——What do you think of Thomas, our gardener? There he is, at the other end of the walk—He's a pretty young man, and the servants say he's always writing verses on you.

Ros. Indeed, Lucinda, you are very silly.

Lucin. Indeed, Rosetta, that blush makes you look very handsome.

Ros. Blush! I am sure I don't blush.

Lucin. Ha, ha, ha!

Ros. Pshaw, Lucinda, how can you be so ridiculous?

Lucin. Well, don't be angry, and I have done—But suppose you did like him, how could you help yourself?

AIR IV.

When once Love's subtle poison gains
A passage to the female breast,
Like lightning rushing through the veins,
Each wish, and every thought's possest.
To heal the pangs our minds endure,
Reason in vain its skill applies;
Nought can afford the heart a cure,
But what is pleasing to the eyes. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.

Another Part of the Garden.

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. *Mead.* Let me see—on the fifteenth of June, at half an hour past five in the morning—[*Taking out a Pocket-book.*]—I left my father's house, unknown to any one, having made free with a coat and jacket of

by way of a disguise: chance directing me to [illegible], on the twentieth of the same month, I procured a recommendation to the worshipful Justice Woodcock, to be the superintendant of his pumpkins and cabbages, because I would let my father see I chose to run any lengths rather than submit to what his obstinacy would have forced me, a marriage against my inclination, with a woman I never saw. [*Puts up the Book, and takes up a Watering-pot.*]—Here I have been three weeks, and in that time I am as much altered as if I changed my nature with my habit. 'Sdeath, to fall in love with a chamber-maid! And yet, if I could forget that I am the son and heir of Sir William Meadows—But that's impossible.

AIR V.

O! had I been by Fate decreed
Some humble cottage swain,
In fair Rosetta's sight to feed
My sheep upon the plain,
What bliss had I been born to taste,
Which now I ne'er must know!
Ye envious powers! why have ye placed
My fair one's lot so low?

Ha! who was it I had a glimpse of as I pass'd by that arbour? Was it not she sat reading there? The trembling of my heart tells me my eyes were not mistaken. Here she comes.

Enter ROSETTA.

Ros. Lucinda was certainly in the right of it, and yet I blush to own my weakness even to myself—Marry, hang the fellow, for not being a gentleman.

Y. Mead. I am determined I won't speak to her—[*Turning to a Rose-tree, and plucking the Flowers.*]—

Now or never is the time to conquer myself; besides, I have some reason to believe the girl has no aversion to me: and, as I wish not to do her an injury, it would be cruel to fill her head with notions of what can never happen. [*Hums a Tune.*] Pshaw! rot these roses, how they prick one's fingers!

Ros. He takes no notice of me; but so much the better, I'll be as indifferent as he is. I am sure the poor lad likes me; and if I was to give him any encouragement, I suppose the next thing he talked of would be buying a ring, and being asked in church—Oh, dear pride, I thank you for that thought.

Y. Mead. Ha! going without a word! a look!—I can't bear that—Mrs Rosetta, I am gathering a few roses here, if you please to take them in with you.

Ros. Thank you, Mr Thomas, but all my lady's flower-pots are full.

Y. Mead. Will you accept of them for yourself, then? [*Catching hold of her.*] What's the matter? you look as if you were angry with me.

Ros. Pray, let go my hand.

Y. Mead. Nay, pr'ythee, why is this? you sha'n't go, I have something to say to you.

Ros. Well, but I must go, I will go; I desire, Mr Thomas——

AIR VI.

Gentle youth, ah, tell me why
Still you force me thus to fly;
Cease, oh! cease, to persevere,
Speak not what I must not hear;
To my heart its ease restore;
Go, and never see me more. [Exit.

Y. Mead. This girl is a riddle—That she loves me, I think there is no room to doubt; she takes a thousand opportunities to let me see it: and yet when I

speak to her, she will hardly give me an answer; and if I attempt the smallest familiarity, is gone in an instant—I feel my passion for her grow every day more and more violent———Well, would I marry her? would I make a mistress of her if I could? Two things, called prudence and honour, forbid either. What am I pursuing, then? A shadow. Sure my evil genius laid this snare in my way. However, there is one comfort, it is in my power to fly from it; if so, why do I hesitate? I am distracted, unable to determine any thing.

AIR VII.

Still in hopes to get the better
Of my stubborn flame I try;
Swear this moment to forget her,
And the next my oath deny.
Now prepared with scorn to treat her,
Ev'ry charm in thought I brave;
Boast my freedom, fly to meet her,
And confess myself a slave. [Exit.

SCENE II.

A Hall in JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *House.*

Enter HAWTHORN, *with a Fowling-piece in his Hand, and a Net with Birds at his Girdle.*

AIR VIII.

There was a jolly miller once,
Lived on the river Dee;
He work'd and sung from morn till night;
No lark more blithe than he.

And this the burden of his song
For ever used to be,
I care for nobody, no, not I,
If no one cares for me.

House, here, house! what, all gadding, all abroad? house, I say, hilli ho ho!

J. Wood. [*Without.*] Here's a noise! here's a racket! William! Robert! Hodge! why does not somebody answer? Odds my life, I believe the fellows have lost their hearing!

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK.

Oh, Master Hawthorn! I guessed it was some such madcap—Are you there?

Hawth. Am I here? Yes: and if you had been where I was three hours ago, you would find the good effects of it by this time; but you have got the lazy unwholesome London fashion of lying a bed in a morning, and there's gout for you—Why, sir, I have not been in bed five minutes after sun-rise these thirty years, am generally up before it; and I never took a dose of physic but once in my life, and that was in compliment to a cousin of mine, an apothecary, that had just set up in business.

J. Wood. Well, but Master Hawthorn, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter, for I say sleep is necessary for a man; ay, and I'll maintain it.

Hawth. What, when I maintain the contrary?—Look you, neighbour Woodcock, you are a rich man, a man of worship, a justice of peace, and all that; but learn to know the respect that is due to the sound from the infirm; and allow me that superiority a good constitution gives me over you—Health is the greatest of all possessions; and 'tis a maxim with me, that an hale cobler is a better man than a sick king.

J. Wood. Well, well, you are a sportsman.

Hawth. And so would you too, if you would take my advice. A sportsman! why there is nothing like it: I would not exchange the satisfaction I feel while I am beating the lawns and thickets about my little farm, for all the entertainments and pageantry in Christendom.

AIR IX.

Let gay ones and great
Make the most of their fate;
From pleasure to pleasure they run:
Well, who cares a jot?
I envy them not,
While I have my dog and my gun.
For exercise, air,
To the fields I repair,
With spirits unclouded and light;
The blisses I find,
No stings leave behind,
But health and diversion unite.

Enter HODGE.

Hodge. Did your worship call, sir?

J. Wood Call, sir! where have you and the rest of these rascals been? but I suppose I need not ask—You must know there is a statute, a fair for hiring servants, held upon my green to-day; we have it usually at this season of the year, and it never fails to put all the folks hereabout out of their senses.

Hodge. Lord, your honour, look out, and see what a nice show they make yonder; they had got pipers and fiddlers, and were dancing as I came along, for dear life—I never saw such a mortal throng in our village in all my born days again.

Hawth. Why I like this now, this is as it should be.

J. Wood. No, no, 'tis a very foolish piece of business; good for nothing but to promote idleness and the getting of bastards: but I shall take measures for preventing it another year, and I doubt whether I am not sufficiently authorized already; for by an act passed *Anno undecimo Caroli primi*, which impowers a justice of peace, who is lord of the manor——

Hawth. Come, come, never mind the act; let me tell you this is a very proper, a very useful meeting; I want a servant or two myself, I must go see what your market affords; and you shall go, and the girls, my little Lucy and the other young rogue, and we'll make a day on't as well as the rest.

J. Wood. I wish, master Hawthorn, I could teach you to be a little more sedate: why won't you take pattern by me, and consider your dignity?—Odds heart, I don't wonder you are not a rich man; you laugh too much ever to be rich.

Hawth. Right, neighbour Woodcock! health, good-humour, and competence, is my motto: and if my executors have a mind, they are welcome to make it my epitaph.

AIR X.

The honest heart, whose thoughts are clear
From fraud, disguise, and guile,
Need neither Fortune's frowning fear,
Nor court the harlot's smile.

The greatne's that would make us grave
Is but an empty thing;
What more than mirth would mortals have?
The cheerful man's a king. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV.

The Hall.

Enter LUCINDA *and* HODGE.

Lucin. Hist, hist, Hodge!

Hodge. Who calls? here am I.

Lucin. Well, have you been?

Hodge. Been! ay I ha' been far enough, an' that be all: you never knew any thing fall out so crossly in your born days.

Lucin. Why, what's the matter?

Hodge. Why, you know, I dare not take a horse out of his worship's stables this morning, for fear it should be missed, and breed questions; and our old nag at home was so cruelly beat i' th' hoofs, that, poor beast, it had not a foot to set to ground; so I was fain to go to Farmer Ploughshare's, at the Grange, to borrow the loan of his bald filly; and, would you think it? after walking all that way—de'el from me, if the cross-grain'd toad did not deny me the favour.

Lucin. Unlucky!

Hodge. Well, then I went my ways to the King's-head in the village, but all their cattle were at plough: and I was as far to seek below at the turnpike: so at last, for want of a better, I was forced to take up with Dame Quickset's blind mare.

Lucin. Oh, then you have been?

Hodge. Yes, yes, I ha' been.

Lucin. Pshaw! Why did not you say so at once?

Hodge. Ay, but I have had a main tiresome jaunt on't, for she is a sorry jade at best.

Lucin. Well, well, did you see Mr Eustace, and what did he say to you? Come, quick—have you e'er a letter?

Hodge. Yes, he gave me a letter, if I ha'na lost it.

Lucin. Lost it, man!

Hodge. Nay, nay, have a bit of patience: adwawns, you are always in such a hurry—[*Rummaging his Pockets.*] I put it somewhere in this waistcoat pocket. Oh, here it is.

Lucin. So, give it me. [*Reads the Letter to herself.*

Hodge. Lord-a-mercy! how my arms aches with beating that plaguy beast; I'll be hang'd if I won'na rather ha' thrash'd half a day, than ha' ridden her.

Lucin. Well, Hodge, you have done your business very well.

Hodge. Well, have not I now?

Lucin. Yes—Mr Eustace tells me in this letter, that he will be in the green lane, at the other end of the village, by twelve o'clock—You know where he came before?

Hodge. Ay, ay.

Lucin. Well, you must go there; and wait till he arrives, and watch your opportunity to introduce him, across the fields, into the little summer-house, on the left side of the garden.

Hodge. That's enough.

Lucin. But take particular care that nobody sees you.

Hodge. I warrant you.

Lucin. Nor for your life drop a word of it to any mortal.

Hodge. Never fear me.'

Lucin. And, Hodge——

AIR XI.

Hodge. *Well, well, say no more;*
Sure you told me before;
I see the full length of my tether;
Do you think I'm a fool,
That I need go to school?
I can spell you and put you together.

A word to the wise
Will always suffice;
Addsniggers, go talk to your parrot;
I'm not such an elf,
Though I say it myself,
But I know a sheep's head from a carrot.

[Exit.

Lucin. How severe is my case! Here I am obliged to carry on a clandestine correspondence with a man in all respects my equal, because the oddity of my father's temper is such, that I dare not tell him I have ever yet seen the person I should like to marry—But perhaps he has quality in his eye, and hopes, one day or other, as I am his only child, to match me with a title—vain imagination!

AIR XII.

Cupid, god of soft persuasion,
Take the helpless lover's part:
Seize, oh seize, some kind occasion,
To reward a faithful heart.

Justly those we tyrants call,
Who the body would enthral;
Tyrants of more cruel kind,
Those who would enslave the mind.

What is grandeur? foe to rest;
Childish mummery at best;
Happy I, in humble state;
Catch, ye fools, the glittering bait. [Exit.

SCENE V.

A Field, with a Stile.

Enter HODGE, *followed by* MARGERY; *and in some Time after, enter* YOUNG MEADOWS.

Hodge. What does the wench follow me for? Odds flesh, folks may well talk, to see you dangling after me every where, like a tantony pig: find some other road, can't you; and don't keep wherretting me with your nonsense.

Marg Nay, pray you, Hodge, stay, and let me speak to you a bit.

Hodge. Well! what sayn you?

Marg. Dear heart, how can you be so barbarous? and is this the way you serve me after all? and won't you keep your word, Hodge?

Hodge. Why, no I won't, tell you; I have changed my mind.

Marg Nay, but surely, surely—Consider, Hodge, you are obligated in conscience to make me an honest woman.

Hodge. Obligated in conscience!—How am I obligated?

Marg. Because you are; and none but the basest of rogues would bring a poor girl to shame, and afterwards leave her to the wide world.

Hodge. Bring you to shame! Don't make me speak, Madge, don't make me speak.

Marg. Yes do, speak your worst.

Hodge. Why then, if you go to that, you were fain to leave your own village, down in the West, for a bastard you had by the clerk of the parish, and I'll bring the man shall say it to your face.

Marg. No, no, Hodge, 'tis no such thing, 'tis a base lie of Farmer Ploughshare's—But I know what makes you false-hearted to me, that you may keep company

with young madam's waiting woman, and I am sure she's no fit body for a poor man's wife.

Hodge. How should you know what she's fit for? She's fit for as much as you mayhap; don't find fault with your betters, Madge—[*Seeing* YOUNG MEADOWS.] O, Master Thomas! I have a word or two to say to you:—Pray did not you go down to the village one day last week, with a basket of something upon your shoulder?

Y. *Mead.* Well, what then?

Hodge. Nay, not much, only the ostler at the Green-man was saying as how there was a passenger at their house as see'd you go by, and said he know'd you: and axt a mort of questions—So I thought I'd tell you.

Y. *Mead.* The devil! ask questions about me! I know nobody in this part of the country; there must be some mistake in it—Come hither, Hodge. [*Exeunt.*

Marg. A nasty ungrateful fellow, to use me at this rate, after being to him as I have. Well, well, I wish all poor girls would take warning by my mishap, and never have nothing to say to none of them.

AIR XIII.

How happy were my days till now!
I ne'er did sorrow feel,
I rose with joy to milk my cow,
Or take my spinning-wheel.

My heart was lighter than a fly,
Like any bird I sung,
Till he pretended love, and I
Believed his flattering tongue.

Oh the fool, the silly fool,
Who trusts what man may be;
I wish I was a maid again,
And in my own country. [Exit.

SCENE VI.

A Green, with the Prospect of a Village, and the Representation of a Statute or Fair.

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, MRS DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, ROSETTA, YOUNG MEADOWS, HODGE, *and several* COUNTRY PEOPLE.

Hodge. This way, your worship, this way. Why don't you stand aside there! Here's his worship a-coming.

Countr. His worship!

J. Wood. Fye, fye, what a crowd's this! Odd, I'll put some of them in the stocks. [*Striking a Fellow.*] Stand out of the way, sirrah.

Hawth. For shame, neighbour. Well, my lad, are you willing to serve the king?

Countr. Why, can you list ma? Serve the king, master! no, no, I pay the king, that's enough for me. Ho, ho, ho!

Hawth. Well said, Sturdy-boots.

J. Wood. Nay, if you talk to them, they'll answer you.

Hawth. I would have them do so, I like they should.—Well, madam, is not this a fine sight? I did not know my neighbour's estate had been so well peopled. Are all these his own tenants?

Mrs Deb. More than are good of them, Mr Hawthorn. I don't like to see such a parcel of young hussies fleering with the fellows.

Hawth. There's a lass. [*Beckoning to a* COUNTRY GIRL. Come hither, my pretty maid. What brings

you here? [*Chucking her under the Chin.*] Do you come to look for a service?

C. Girl. Yes, an't please you.

Hawth. Well, and what place are you for?

C. Girl. All work, an't please you.

J. Wood. Ay, ay, I don't doubt it; any work you'll put her to.

Mrs Deb. She looks like a brazen one—Go, hussy.

Hawth. Here's another. [*Catching a Girl that goes by.*] What health, what bloom!—This is nature's work; no art, no daubing. Don't be ashamed, child; those cheeks of thine are enough to put a whole drawing-room out of countenance.

Hodge. Now, your honour, now the sport will come. The gut-scrapers are here, and some among them are going to sing and dance. Why there's not the like of our statute, mun, in five counties; others are but fools to it.

Servant-man. Come, good people, make a ring, and stand out, fellow-servants, as many of you as are willing, and able to bear a bob. We'll let my masters and mistresses see we can do something at least; if they won't hire us, it sha'n't be our fault. Strike up the Servants' Medley.

AIR XIV.

HOUSEMAID.

I pray ye, gentles, list to me,
I'm young, and strong, and clean you see;
I'll not turn tail to any she
For work that's in the country.
Of all your house the charge I take,
I wash, I scrub, I brew, I bake;
And more can do than here I'll speak,
Depending on your bounty.

FOOTMAN.

Behold a blade, who knows his trade
In chamber, hall, and entry;
And what tho' here I now appear,
I've served the best of gentry.
A footman would you have,
I can dress, and comb, and shave;
For I a handy lad am;
On a message I can go,
And slip a billet-doux,
With your humble servant, madam.

COOK-MAID.

Who wants a good cook, my hand they must cross;
For plain wholesome dishes I'm ne'er at a loss;
And what are your soups, your ragouts, and your sauce,
Compared to English roast beef?

CARTER.

If you want a young man, with a true honest heart,
Who knows how to manage a plough and a cart,
Here's one for your purpose, come take me and try;
You'll say you ne'er met with a better nor I.
Gee ho, Dobbin, &c.

CHORUS.

My masters and mistresses, hither repair;
What servants you want you'll find in our fair;
Men and maids fit for all sorts of stations there be;
And, as for the wages, we sha'n't disagree. [Exeunt.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Parlour in JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *House.*

LUCINDA *and* EUSTACE.

Lucin. Well, am not I a bold adventurer, to bring you into my father's house at noon-day? Though, to say the truth, we are safer here than in the garden; for there is not a human creature under the roof besides ourselves.

Eust. Then why not put our scheme into execution this moment? I have a post chaise ready.

Lucin. Fye! how can you talk so lightly? I protest I am afraid to have any thing to do with you, your passion seems too much founded on appetite; and my aunt Deborah says—

Eust. What! by all the rapture my heart now feels——

Lucin. Oh, to be sure, promise and vow; it sounds prettily, and never fails to impose upon a fond female.

AIR XV.

We women like weak Indians trade,
Whose judgment tinsel show decoys;
Dupes to our folly we are made,
While artful man the gain enjoys:
We give our treasure to be paid,
A paltry, poor return! in toys.

Eust. Well, I see you've a mind to divert yourself with me; but I wish I could prevail on you to be a little serious.

Lucin. Seriously then, what would you desire me to say? I have promised to run away with you; which is as great a concession as any reasonable lover can expect from his mistress.

Eust Yes; but, you dear provoking angel, you have not told me when you will run away with me.

Lucin. Why that, I confess, requires some consideration.

Eust. Yet remember, while you are deliberating, the season, now so favourable to us, may elapse, never to return.

AIR XVI.

Think, my fairest, how delay
Danger every moment brings;
Time flies swift, and will away;
Time that's ever on its wings;
Doubting and suspence at best,
Lovers late repentance cost;
Let us, eager to be blest,
Seize occasion ere 'tis lost.

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK *and* MRS DEBORAH WOODCOCK.

J. Wood. Why, here is nothing in the world in this house but caterwauling from morning to night—nothing but caterwauling. Hoity toity! who have we here?

Lucin. My father and my aunt!

Eust. The devil! What shall we do?

Lucin. Take no notice of them, only observe me. [*Speaks aloud to* EUSTACE.] Upon my word, sir, I don't know what to say to it, unless the Justice was

at home; he is just stepped into the village with some company; but, if you will sit down a moment, I dare swear he will return [*Pretends to see the* JUSTICE.]—Oh! sir, here is my papa!

J. Wood. Here is your papa, hussy! Who's this you have got with you? Hark you, sirrah, who are you, ye dog? and what's your business here?

Eust. Sir, this is a language I am not used to.

J. Wood. Don't answer me, you rascal—I am a justice of the peace; and if I hear a word out of your mouth, I'll send you to jail, for all your laced hat.

Mrs Deb. Send him to jail, brother, that's right.

J. Wood. And how do you know 'tis right? How should you know any thing's right?—Sister Deborah, you are never in the right.

Mrs Deb. Brother, this is the man I have been telling you about so long.

J. Wood. What man, goody Wiseacre?

Mrs Deb. Why, the man your daughter has an intrigue with; but I hope you will not believe it now, though you see it with your own eyes—Come, hussy, confess, and don't let your father make a fool of himself any longer.

Lucin. Confess what, aunt? This gentleman is a music-master: he goes about the country teaching ladies to play and sing; and has been recommended to instruct me; I could not turn him out when he came to offer his service, and did not know what answer to give him till I saw my papa.

J. Wood. A music-master!

Eust. Yes, sir, that's my profession.

Mrs Deb. It's a lie, young man; it's a lie. Brother, he is no more a music-master, than I am a music-master.

J. Wood. What, then you know better than the fellow himself, do you? and you will be wiser than all the world?

Mrs Deb. Brother, he does not look like a music-master.

J. Wood. He does not look! ha! ha! ha! Was ever such a poor stupe! Well, and what does he look like then? But I suppose you mean he is not dressed like a music-master, because of his ruffles, and this bit of garnishing about his coat—which seems to be copper too—Why, you silly wretch, these whipper-snappers set up for gentlemen, now-a-days, and give themselves as many airs as if they were people of quality.—Hark you, friend, I suppose you don't come within the vagrant act? You have some settled habitation?—Where do you live?

Mrs Deb It's an easy matter for him to tell you a wrong place.

J. Wood. Sister Deborah, don't provoke me.

Mrs Deb. I wish, brother, you would let me examine him a little.

J. Wood. You sha'n't say a word to him, you sha'n t say a word to him.

Mrs Deb. She says he was recommended here, brother; ask him by whom?

J. Wood. No, I won't now, because you desire it.

Lucin. If my papa did ask the question, aunt, it would be very easily resolved.

Mrs Deb. Who bid you speak, Mrs Nimble Chops? I suppose the man has a tongue in his head to answer for himself.

J. Wood. Will nobody stop that prating old woman's mouth for me? Get out of the room.

Mrs Deb. Well, so I can. brother; I don't want to stay: but remember, I tell you, you will make yourself ridiculous in this affair; for through your own obstinacy, you will have your daughter run away with before your face.

J. Wood. My daughter! Who will run away with my daughter?

Mrs Deb. That fellow will.

J. Wood. Go, go, you are a wicked censorious woman.

Lucin. Why sure, madam, you must think me very coming indeed.

J. Wood. Ay, she judges of others by herself; I remember, when she was a girl, her mother dared not trust her the length of her apron string; she was clambering upon every young fellow's back.

Mrs Deb. I was not.

J. Wood. You were.

Lucin. Well, but why so violent?

AIR XVII.

Believe me, dear aunt,
If you rave thus and rant,
You'll never a lover persuade;
The men will all fly,
And leave you to die,
Oh, terrible chance! an old maid.

How happy the lass,
Must she come to this pass,
Who ancient virginity 'scapes?
'Twere better on earth,
Have five brats at a birth,
Than in hell be a leader of apes.

[*Exit* MRS DEB.

J. Wood. Well done, Lucy, send her about her business; a troublesome, foolish creature! does she think I want to be directed by her?—Come hither, my lad, you look tolerable honest.

Eust. I hope, sir, I shall never give you cause to alter your opinion.

J. Wood. No, no, I am not easily deceived; I am generally pretty right in my conjectures.—You must know, I had once a little notion of music myself, and learned upon the fiddle; I could play the Trumpet Minuet, and Buttered Peas, and two or three tunes.

I remember when I was in London, about thirty years ago, there was a song, a great favourite at our club at Nando's coffee-house! Jack Pickle used to sing it for us; a droll fish: but 'tis an old thing, I dare swear you have heard it often.

AIR XVIII.

When I followed a lass that was froward and shy,
Oh! I stuck to her stuff, till I made her comply;
Oh! I took her so lovingly round the waist,
And I smack'd her lips, and held her fast:
When hugg'd and haul'd,
She squeal'd and squall'd:
But though she vow'd all I did was in vain,
Yet I pleased her so well that she bore it again:
Then hoity, toity,
Whisking, frisking,
Green was her gown upon the grass;
Oh! such were the joys of our dancing days.

Eust. Very well, sir, upon my word.

J. Wood. No, no, I forget all those things now; but I could do a little at them once:—Well, stay and eat your dinner, and we'll talk about your teaching the girl—Lucy, take your master to your spinnet, and show him what you can do—I must go and give some orders; *Then hoity, toity, &c.* [*Exit.*

Lucin. My sweet pretty papa, your most obedient humble servant; ha! ha! ha! was ever so whimsical an accident! Well, sir, what do you think of this?

Eust. Think of it! I am in amaze.

Lucin. O your awkwardness! I was frightened out of my wits, lest you should not take the hint; and if I had not turned matters so cleverly, we should have been utterly undone.

Eust. 'Sdeath! why would you bring me into the house? we could expect nothing else: besides, since hey did surprise us, it would have been better to have discovered the truth.

Lucin. Yes, and never have seen one another afterwards! I know my father better than you do; he has taken it into his head, I have no inclination for a husband; and, let me tell you, that is our best security; for if once he has said a thing, he will not be easily persuaded to the contrary.

Eust. And pray what am I to do now?

Lucin. Why, as I think all danger is pretty well over, since he has invited you to dinner with him, stay; only be cautious of your behaviour; and, in the mean time, I will consider what is next to be done.

Eust. Had not I better go to your father?

Lucin. Do so, while I endeavour to recover myself a little out of the flurry this affair has put me in.

Eust. Well, but what sort of a parting is this, without so much as "your servant," or "good bye to you?" No ceremony at all? Can you afford me no token to keep up my spirits till I see you again?

Lucin. Ah, childish!

Eust. My angel!

AIR XIX.

Eust. *Let rakes and libertines resign'd*
To sensual pleasures, range;
Here all the sex's charms I find,
And ne'er can cool or change.

Lucin. *Let vain coquets and prudes conceal*
What most their hearts desire;
With pride my passion I reveal,
Oh! may it ne'er expire.

Both. *The sun shall cease to spread its light,*
The stars their orbits leave;
And fair creation sink in night,
When I my dear deceive. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.

A Garden.

Enter ROSETTA.

Ros. If ever poor creature was in a pitiable condition, surely I am. The devil take this fellow, I cannot get him out of my head; and yet I would fain persuade myself I don't care for him—well, but surely I am not in love?—Let me examine my heart a little: I saw him kissing one of the maids the other day—I could have boxed his ears for it—and have done nothing but find fault and quarrel with the girl ever since. Why was I uneasy at his toying with another woman?—what was it to me?—Then I dream of him almost every night—but that may proceed from his being generally uppermost in my thoughts all day:—O! worse and worse!—Well, he is certainly a pretty lad; he has something uncommon about him, considering his rank:—And now let me only put the case, if he was not a servant, would I, or would I not, prefer him to all the men I ever saw? Why, to be sure, if he was not a servant—In short, I'll ask myself no more questions, for the further I examine, the less reason I shall have to be satisfied.

AIR XX.

How bless'd the maid, whose bosom
No headstrong passion knows;
Her days in joys she passes,
Her nights in calm repose.
Where'er her fancy leads her,
No pain or fear invades her;
But pleasure,
Without measure,
From every object flows.

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mead. Do you come into the garden, Mrs Rosetta, to put my lilies and roses out of countenance; or to save me the trouble of watering my flowers, by reviving them? The sun seems to have hid himself a little, to give you an opportunity of supplying his place.

Ros. Where could he get that now? he never read it in the Academy of Compliments.

Y. Mead. Come, don't affect to treat me with contempt; I can suffer any thing better than that; in short, I love you; there is no more to be said: I am angry with myself for it, and strive all I can against it: but, in spite of myself, I love you.

AIR XXI.

In vain I every art essay,
To pluck the venom'd shaft away
That rankles in my heart;
Deep in the centre fixed, and bound,
My efforts but enlarge the wound,
And fiercer make the smart.

Ros. Really, Mr Thomas, this is very improper language; it is what I don't understand; I can't suffer it, and, in short, I don't like it.

Y. Mead. Perhaps you don't like me.

Ros. Well, perhaps I don't.

Y. Mead. Nay, but 'tis not so; come, confess you love me.

Ros. Confess! indeed I shall confess no such thing: besides, to what purpose should I confess it?

Y. Mead. Why, as you say, I don't know to what purpose; only it would be a satisfaction to me to hear you say so; that's all.

Ros. Why, if I did love you, I can assure you, you would never be the better for it—Women are apt enough to be weak; we cannot always answer for our inclinations, but it is in our power not to give way to them; and if I was so silly—I say, if I was so indiscreet, which I hope I am not, as to entertain an improper regard, when people's circumstances are quite unsuitable, and there are obstacles in the way that cannot be surmounted—

Y. Mead. Oh! to be sure, Mrs Rosetta, to be sure: you are entirely in the right of it—I—know very well, you and I can never come together.

Ros. Well, then, since that is the case, as I assure you it is, I think we had better behave accordingly.

Y. Mead. Suppose we make a bargain then, never to speak to one another any more?

Ros. With all my heart.

Y. Mead. Nor look, nor, if possible, think of one another?

Ros. I am very willing.

Y. Mead. And, as long as we stay in the house together, never to take any notice?

Ros. It is the best way.

Y. Mead. Why, I believe it is—Well, Mrs Rosetta—

AIR XXII.

Ros. *Be gone—I agree;*
From this moment we're free:
Already the matter I've sworn:
Y. Mead. *Yet let me complain*
Of the fates that ordain,
A trial so hard to be borne.
Ros. *When things are not fit,*
We should calmly submit;
No cure in reluctance we find.
Y. Mead. *Then thus I obey,*
Tear your image away,
And banish you quite from my mind.

Ros. [*Aside.*] Well, now I think I am somewhat easier: I am glad I have come to this explanation with him, because it puts an end to things at once.

Y. Mead. Hold, Mrs Rosetta, pray stay a moment —The airs this girl gives herself are intolerable:—I find now the cause of her behaviour; she despises the meanness of my condition, thinking a gardener below the notice of a lady's waiting woman!—'Sdeath, I have a good mind to discover myself to her. [*Aside.*

Ros. Poor wretch! he does not know what to make of it: I believe he is heartily mortified; but I must not pity him. [*Aside.*

Y. Mead. It shall be so; I will discover myself to her, and leave the house directly—Mrs Rosetta— [*Starting back.*] Pox on it, yonder's the justice come into the garden!

Ros. O lord! he will walk round this way;—pray go about your business; I would not for the world he should see us together.

Y. Mead. The devil take him! he's gone across the parterre, and can't hobble here this half hour; I must and will have a little conversation with you.

Ros. Some other time.

Y. Mead. This evening, in the green-house at the lower end of the canal; I have something to communicate to you of importance. Will you meet me there?

Ros. Meet you!

Y. Mead. Ay; I have a secret to tell you; and I swear from that moment there shall be an end of every thing betwixt us.

Ros. Well, well, pray leave me now.

Y. Mead. You'll come then?

Ros. I don't know, perhaps I may.

Y. Mead. Nay, but promise.

Ros. What signifies promising; I may break my promise—but I tell you I will.

Y. Mead. Enough—Yet before I leave you, let me

desire you to believe I love you more than ever man loved woman; and that, when I relinquish you, I give up all that can make my life supportable.

AIR XXIII.

Oh! how shall I in language weak
My ardent passion tell;
Or form my falt'ring tongue to speak
That cruel word, farewell!
Farewell—but know, though thus we part,
My thoughts can never stray:
Go where I will, my constant heart
Must with my charmer stay. [Exit.

Ros. What can this be that he wants to tell me? I have a strange curiosity to hear it, methinks—well—

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK.

J. Wood. Hem; hem; Rosetta!

Ros. So, I thought the devil would throw him in my way; now for a courtship of a different kind; but I'll give him a surfeit—Did you call me, sir?

J. Wood. Ay, where are you running so fast?

Ros. I was only going into the house, sir.

J. Wood. Well, but come here; come here, I say. [*Looking about.*] How do you do, Rosetta?

Ros. Thank you, sir, pretty well.

J. Wood. Why, you look as fresh and bloomy to-day—Adad, you little slut, I believe you are painted.

Ros. O! sir, your are pleased to compliment.

J. Wood. Adad, I believe you are—let me try—

Ros. Lord, sir!

J. Wood. What brings you into this garden so often, Rosetta? I hope you don't get eating green fruit and trash; or have you a hankering after some lover in dowlas, who spoils my trees, by engraving true-

lovers' knots on them, with your horn and buck-handled knives? I see your name written upon the cieling of the servants' hall, with the smoke of a candle; and I suspect—

Ros. Not me, I hope, sir,—No, sir; I am of another guess mind, I assure you; for, I have heard say men are false and fickle—

J. Wood. Ay, that's your flaunting, idle young fellows; so they are: and they are so damn'd impudent I wonder a woman will have any thing to say to them; besides, all that they want is something to brag of, and tell again.

Ros. Why, I own, sir, if ever I was to make a slip, it should be with an elderly gentleman—about seventy, or seventy-five years of age.

J. Wood. No, child, that's out of reason; though I have known many a man turned of threescore with a hale constitution.

Ros. Then, sir, he should be troubled with the gout, have a good strong, substantial, winter cough—and I should not like him the worse—if he had a small touch of the rheumatism.

J. Wood. Pho, pho, Rosetta, this is jesting.

Ros. No, sir, every body has a taste, and I have mine.

J. Wood. Well, but, Rosetta, have you thought of what I was saying to you?

Ros. What was it, sir?

J. Wood. Ah! you know, you know well enough, hussy.

Ros. Dear sir, consider what has a poor servant to depend on but her character? And, I have heard, you gentlemen will talk one thing before, and another after.

J. Wood. I tell you again, these are the idle, flashy young dogs: but when you have to do with a staid, sober man—

Ros. And a magistrate, sir!

J. Wood. Right; it's quite a different thing—— Well, shall we, Rosetta, shall we?

Ros. Really, sir, I don't know what to say to it.

AIR XXIV.

Young I am, and sore afraid:
Would you hurt a harmless maid?
Lead an innocent astray?
Tempt me not, kind sir, I pray.
Men too often we believe:
And should you my faith deceive,
Ruin first and then forsake,
Sure my tender heart would break.

J. Wood. Why, you silly girl, I won't do you any harm.

Ros. Won't you, sir?

J. Wood. Not I.

Ros. But won't you, indeed, sir?

J. Wood. Why, I tell you I won't.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!

J. Wood. Hussy, hussy.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!—Your servant, sir, your servant. [*Exit.*

J. Wood. Why, you impudent, audacious—

Enter HAWTHORN.

Hawth. So, so, justice at odds with gravity! his worship playing at romps!—Your servant, sir.

J Wood. Haw: friend Hawthorn!

Hawth. I hope I don't spoil sport, neighbour: I thought I had the glimpse of a petticoat as I came in here.

J. Wood. Oh! the maid—Ay, she has been gathering a sallad—But come hither, Master Hawthorn, and I'll show you some alterations I intend to make in my garden.

Hawth. No, no, I am no judge of it; besides, I want to talk to you a little more about this—Tell me, Sir Justice, were you helping your maid to gather a sallad here, or consulting her taste in your improvements, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Let me see, all among the roses; egad, I like your notion: but you look a little blank upon it: you are ashamed of the business, then, are you?

AIR XXV.

Oons! neighbour, ne'er blush for a trifle like this;
What harm with a fair one to toy and to kiss?
The greatest and gravest—a truce with grimace!—
Would do the same thing, were they in the same place.

No age, no profession, no station is free;
To sovereign beauty mankind bends the knee:
That power resistless, no strength can oppose,
We all love a pretty girl——under the rose.

J. Wood. I profess, Master Hawthorn, this is all Indian, all Cherokee language to me; I don't understand a word of it.

Hawth. No, may be not: well, sir, will you read this letter, and try whether you can understand that? it is just brought by a servant, who stays for an answer.

J Wood A letter, and to me! [*Taking the Letter.*] Yes, it is to me; and yet I am sure it comes from no correspondent that I know of. Where are my spectacles? not but I can see very well without them, Master Hawthorn: but this seems to be a sort of a crabbed hand.

SIR,

I am ashamed of giving you this trouble; but I am informed there is an unthinking boy, a son of mine,

now disguised and in your service, in the capacity of a gardener: Tom is a little wild, but an honest lad, and no fool either, though I am his father that say it.—— Tom—oh, this is Thomas, our gardener; I always thought that he was a better man's child than he appeared to be, though I never mentioned it.

Hawth. Well, well, sir, pray let's hear the rest of the letter.

J. Wood. Stay, where is the place? Oh, here——

I am come in quest of my runaway, and write this at an inn in your village, while I am swallowing a morsel of dinner: because not having the pleasure of your acquaintance, I did not care to intrude, without giving you notice——(Whoever this person is, he understands good manners.)——*I beg leave to wait on you, sir; but desire you would keep my arrival a secret, particularly from the young man.*

WILLIAM MEADOWS.

I'll assure you, a very well-worded, civil letter. Do you know any thing of the person who writes it, neighbour?

Hawth. Let me consider—Meadows—by dad, I believe it is Sir William Meadows of Northamptonshire; and, now I remember, I heard, some time ago, that the heir of that family had absconded, on account of a marriage that was disagreeable to him. It is a good many years since I have seen Sir William, but we were once well acquainted; and, if you please, sir, I will go and conduct him to the house.

J. Wood. Do so, Master Hawthorn, do so,——But, pray, what sort of a man is this Sir William Meadows? Is he a wise man?

Hawth. There is no occasion for a man that has five thousand pounds a year to be a conjuror; but I suppose you ask that question, because of this story

about his son; taking it for granted, that wise parents make wise children.

J. Wood. No doubt of it, Master Hawthorn, no doubt of it—I warrant we shall find now, that this young rascal has fallen in love with some minx, against his father's consent—Why, sir, if I had as many children as King Priam had, that we read of at school, in the destruction of Troy, not one of them should serve me so.

Hawth. Well, well, neighbour, perhaps not; but we should remember we were young ourselves; and I was as likely to play an old don such a trick in my day, as e'er a spark in the hundred:—nay, between you and me, I had done it once, had the wench been as willing as I.

AIR. XXVI.

My Dolly was the fairest thing!
Her breath disclosed the sweets of spring;
And if for summer you would seek,
'Twas painted in her eye, her cheek;
Her swelling bosom, tempting ripe,
Of fruitful autumn was the type;
But when my tender tale I told,
I found her heart was winter cold.

J. Wood. Ah, you were always a scape-grace rattle-cap.

Hawth. Odds heart, neighbour Woodcock, don't tell me, young fellows will be young fellows, though we preach till we're hoarse again: and so there's an end on't. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *Hall.*

HODGE *and* MARGERY.

Hodge. So, mistress, who let you in?

Marg. Why, I let myself in.

Hodge. Indeed! Marry come up! why, then, pray let yourself out again. Times are come to a pretty pass;—I think you might have had the manners to knock at the door first.—What does the wench stand for?

Marg. I want to know if his worship's at home?

Hodge. Well, what's your business with his worship?

Marg. Perhaps you will hear that—Look ye, Hodge, it does not signify talking, I am come, once for all, to know what you intends to do; for I won't be made a fool of any longer.

Hodge. You won't?

Marg. No, that's what I won't, by the best man that ever wore a head. I am the make-game of the whole village upon your account; and I'll try whether your master gives you toleration in your doings.

Hodge. You will?

Marg. Yes, that's what I will; his worship shall be acquainted with all your pranks, and see how you will like to be sent for a soldier.

Hodge. There's the door; take a friend's advice, and go about your business.

Marg. My business is with his worship, and I won't go till I sees him.

Hodge. Look you, Madge, if you make any of

your orations here, never stir if I don't set the dogs at you—Will you begone?

Marg. I won't.

Hodge. Here, Towzer. [*Whistling.*] Whu, whu, whu!

AIR XXVII.

Was ever poor fellow so plagued with a vixen?
Zounds! Madge, don't provoke me; but mind what I say;
You've chose a wrong person for playing your tricks on,
So pack up your alls, and be trudging away:
You had better be quiet,
And not breed a riot;
'Sblood, must I stand prating with you here all day?
I've got other matters to mind;
Mayhap you may think me an ass;
But to the contrary you'll find:
A fine piece of work, by the mass!

Enter ROSETTA.

Ros. Sure I heard the voice of discord here—as I live, an admirer of mine; and, if I mistake not, a rival—I'll have some sport with them.—How now, fellow-servant, what's the matter?

Hodge. Nothing, Mrs Rosetta; only this young woman wants to speak with his worship.—Madge, follow me.

Marg. No, Hodge, this is your fine madam: but I am as good flesh and blood as she, and have as clear a skin too, tho'I I mayn't go so gay:—and now she's here, I'll tell her a piece of my mind.

Hodge. Hold your tongue, will you?

Marg. No, I'll speak if I die for it.

Ros. What's the matter, I say?

Hodge. Why nothing, I tell you;—Madge——

Marg. Yes, but it is something, it's all along of she, and she may be ashamed of herself.

Ros. Bless me, child, do you direct your discourse to me?

Marg. Yes, I do, and to nobody else; there was not a kinder soul breathing than he was till of late. I had never a cross word from him till he kept you company; but all the girls about say there is no such thing as keeping a sweetheart for you.

Ros. Do you hear this, friend Hodge?

Hodge. Why, you don't mind she, I hope; but if that vexes her, I do like you, I do; my mind runs upon nothing else; and if so be as you was agreeable to it, I would marry you to-night, before to-morrow.

Marg. You're a nasty monkey, you are parjured, you know you are, and you deserve to have your eyes tore out.

Hodge. Let me come at her—I'll teach you to call names, and abuse folks.

Marg. Do strike me; you a man!

Ros. Hold, hold—we shall have a battle here presently, and I may chance to get my cap tore off—Never exasperate a jealous woman; 'tis taking a mad bull by the horns—Leave me to manage her.

Hodge. You manage her! I'll kick her.

Ros. No, no, it will be more for my credit to get the better of her by fair means—I warrant I'll bring her to reason.

Hodge. Well, do so then—But may I depend upon you? when shall I speak to the parson?

Ros. We'll talk of that another time—Go.

Hodge. Madge, good bye. [*Exit.*

Ros. The brutality of this fellow shocks me!—Oh, man, man—you are all alike—A bumpkin here, bred at the barn-door! had he been brought up in a court, could he have been more fashionably vicious? show

me the lord, 'squire, colonel, or captain of them all, can outdo him.

AIR XXVIII.

Cease, gay seducers, pride to take
In triumphs o'er the fair;
Since clowns as well can act the rake
As those in higher sphere.

Where then to shun a shameful fate
Shall helpless beauty go?
In ev'ry rank, in ev'ry state,
Poor woman finds a foe.

Marg. I am ready to burst; I can't stay in the place any longer.

Ros. Hold, child—come hither.

Marg. Don't speak to me, don't you.

Ros. Well, but I have something to say to you of consequence, and that will be for your good; I suppose this fellow promised you marriage?

Marg. Ay, or he should never have prevail'd upon me.

Ros. Well, now you see the ill consequence of trusting to such promises: when once a man hath cheated a woman of her virtue, she has no longer hold of him; he despises her for wanting that which he hath robb'd her of; and, like a lawless conqueror, triumphs in the ruin he hath occasioned.

Marg. Nan!

Ros. However, I hope the experience you have got, though somewhat dearly purchased, will be of use to you for the future; and as to any designs I have upon the heart of your lover, you may make yourself easy, for, I assure you, I shall be no dangerous rival; so go your ways, and be a good girl.

[*Exit.*

Marg. Yes—I don't very well understand her talk, but I suppose that's as much as to say she'll keep him to herself: well, let her—who cares? I don't fear getting better nor he is any day of the year, for the matter of that; and I have a thought come into my head that may be will be more to my advantage.

AIR XXIX.

Since Hodge proves ungrateful, no further I'll seek,
But go up to town in the waggon next week;
A service in London is no such disgrace,
And Register's office will get me a place:
Bet Blossom went there, and soon met with a friend;
Folks say in her silks she's now standing on end!
Then why should not I the same maxim pursue,
And better my fortune as other girls do? [Exit.

SCENE IV.

A Room in JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *House.*

Enter ROSETTA *and* LUCINDA.

Ros. Ha! ha! ha! Oh, admirable, most delectably ridiculous. And so your father is content he should be a music-master, and will have him such, in spite of all your aunt can say to the contrary?

Lucin. My father and he, child, are the best companions you ever saw, and have been singing together the most hideous duets! Bobbing Joan, and Old Sir Simon the King: Heaven knows where Eustace could pick them up; but he has gone through half the contents of Pills to purge Melancholy with him.

Ros. And have you resolved to take wing to-night?

Lucin. This very night, my dear: my swain will go

from hence this evening, but no farther than the inn where he has left his horses; and at twelve precisely, he will be with a post-chaise at the little gate that opens from the lawn into the road, where I have promised to meet him.

Ros. Then, depend upon it, I'll bear you company.

Lucin. We shall slip out when the family are asleep, and I have prepared Hodge already. Well, I hope we shall be happy.

Ros. Never doubt it.

AIR XXX.

In love should there meet a fond pair,
Untutor'd by fashion or art,
Whose wishes are warm and sincere,
Whose words are th' excess of the heart:

If aught of substantial delight,
On this side the stars can be found,
'Tis sure when that couple unite,
And Cupid by Hymen is crown'd.

Enter HAWTHORN.

Hawth. Lucy, where are you?

Lucin. Your pleasure, sir?

Ros. Mr Hawthorn, your servant.

Hawth. What, my little water wag-tail! The very couple I wish'd to meet: come hither, both of you.

Ros. Now, sir, what would you say to both of us?

Hawth. Why, let me look at you a little—have you got on your best gowns, and your best faces? If not, go and trick yourselves out directly, for I'll tell you a secret—there will be a young bachelor in the house, within these three hours, that may fall to the share of one of you, if you look sharp—but whether mistress or maid——

Ros. Ay, marry, this is something; but how do you know whether either mistress or maid will think him worth acceptance?

Hawth. Follow me, follow me; I warrant you.

Lucin. I can assure you, Mr Hawthorn, I am very difficult to please.

Ros. And so am I, sir.

Hawth. Indeed!

AIR XXXI.

Well, come, let us hear what the swain must possess,
Who may hope at your feet to implore with success?

Ros. *He must be, first of all,*
Straight, comely, and tall:
Lucin. *Neither awkward*
Ros. *Nor foolish,*
Lucin. *Nor apish,*
Ros. *Nor mulish;*
Lucin. Ros. *Nor yet should his fortune be small.*
Hawth. *What think'st of a captain?*
Lucin. *All bluster and wounds!*
Hawth. *What think'st of a 'squire?*
Ros. *To be left to his hounds.*
Lucin. *The youth that is form'd to my mind,*
Must be gentle, obliging and kind;
Of all things in nature love me:
Ros. *Have sense both to speak and to see—*
Yet sometimes be silent and blind.
Hawth. *'Fore George, a most rare matrimonial receipt!*
Ros. Lucin. *Observe it, ye fair, in the choice of a mate;*
Remember, 'tis wedlock determines your fate.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Parlour in JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *House.*

Enter SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS, *followed by* HAWTHORN.

Sir Will. Well, this is excellent, this is mighty good, this is mighty merry, faith; ha! ha! ha! was ever the like heard of? that my boy, Tom, should run away from me for fear of being forced to marry a girl he never saw! that she should scamper from her father for fear of being forced to marry him; and that they should run into one another's arms this way in disguise, by mere accident, against their consents, and without knowing it, as a body may say! May I never do an ill turn, Master Hawthorn, if it is not one of the oddest adventures partly——

Hawth. Why, Sir William, it is a romance—a novel—a pleasanter history by half, than the Loves of Dorastus and Faunia: we shall have ballads made of it within these two months, setting forth, how a young 'squire became a serving man of low degree; and it will be stuck up with Margaret's Ghost and the Spanish Lady, against the walls of every cottage in the country.

Sir Will. But what pleases me best of all, Master Hawthorn, is the ingenuity of the girl. "May I never do an ill turn, when I was called out of the room, and the servant said she wanted to speak to me, if I

knew what to make on't: but when the little gipsey took me aside, and told me her name, and how matters stood, I was quite astonished, as a body may say; and could not believe it partly, till her young friend, that she is with here, assured me of the truth on't: indeed, at last, I began to recollect her face, though I have not set eyes on her before, since she was the height of a full-grown greyhound.

Hawth. Well, Sir William, your son as yet knows nothing of what has happened, nor of your being come hither; and, if you'll follow my counsel, we'll have some sport with him.—He and his mistress were to meet in the garden this evening by appointment; she's gone to dress herself in all her airs; will you let me direct your proceedings in this affair?

Sir Will. With all my heart, Master Hawthorn, with all my heart; do what you will with me, say what you please for me; I am so overjoyed, and so happy—And may I never do an ill turn, but I am very glad to see you too; ay, and, partly, as much pleased at that as any thing else, for we have been merry together before now, when we were some years younger: well, and how has the world gone with you, Master Hawthorn, since we saw one another last?

Hawth. Why, pretty well, Sir William; I have no reason to complain: every one has a mixture of sour with his sweets; but, in the main, I believe, I have done in a degree as tolerably as my neighbours.

AIR XXXII.

The world is a well-furnish'd table,
Where the guests are promisc'ously set;
We all fare as well as we're able,
And scramble for what we can get.

My simile holds to a tittle,
Some gorge, while some scarce have a taste;
But if I'm content with a little,
Enough is as good as a feast.

Enter ROSETTA.

Ros. Sir William, I beg pardon for detaining you, but I have had so much difficulty in adjusting my borrowed plumes——

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn, but they fit you to a T, and you look very well, so you do: Cocksbones, how your father will chuckle when he comes to hear this!—Her father, Master Hawthorn, is as worthy a man as lives by bread, and has been almost out of his senses for the loss of her—But tell me, hussy, has not this been all a scheme, a piece of conjuration between you and my son? Faith, I am half persuaded it has; it looks so like hocus pocus, as a body may say.

Ros. Upon my honour, Sir William, what has happened has been the mere effect of chance; I came hither unknown to your son, and he unknown to me: I never in the least suspected that Thomas the gardener was other than his appearance spoke him; and, least of all, that he was a person with whom I had so close a connexion. Mr Hawthorn can testify the astonishment I was in when he first informed me of it; but I thought it was my duty to come to an immediate explanation with you.

Sir Will. Is not she a neat wench, Master Hawthorn? May I never do an ill turn, but she is—But you little plaguy devil, how came this love affair between you?

Ros. I have told you the whole truth, very ingenuously, sir; since your son and I have been fellow-servants, as I may call it, in this house, I have had more than reason to suspect he had taken a liking to

me; and I will own, with equal frankness, had I not looked upon him as a person so much below me, I should have had no objection to receiving his courtship.

Hawth. Well said, by the lord Harry! all above board, fair and open.

Ros. Perhaps I may be censured by some for this candid declaration, but I love to speak my sentiments; and I assure you, Sir William, in my opinion, I should prefer a gardener, with your son's good qualities, to a knight of the shire without them.

AIR XXXIII.

'Tis not wealth, it is not birth,
Can value to the soul convey;
Minds possess superior worth,
Which chance nor gives nor takes away.
Like the sun, true merit shows,
By nature warm, by nature bright;
With inbred flames, he nobly glows,
Nor needs the aid of borrow'd light.

Hawth. Well, but sir, we lose time—is not this about the hour appointed to meet in the garden?

Ros. Pretty near it.

Hawth. Oons, then, what do we stay for? Come, my old friend, come along; and, by the way, we will consult how to manage your interview.

Sir Will. Ay, but I must speak a word or two to my man about the horses first.

[*Exeunt* SIR WILLIAM *and* HAWTHORN.

Enter HODGE.

Ros. Well—What's the business?

Hodge. Madam—Mercy on us, I crave pardon!

Ros. Why, Hodge, don't you know me?

Hodge. Mrs Rosetta?

Ros. Ay.

Hodge. Know you! Ecod, I don't know whether I do or not: never stir, if I did not think it was some lady belonging to the strange gentlefolks: why, you ben't dizen'd this way to go to the statute dance presently, be you?

Ros. Have patience, and you'll see:—but is there any thing amiss, that you came in so abruptly?

Hodge. Amiss! why, there's ruination.

Ros. How? where?

Hodge. Why, with Miss Lucinda: her aunt has catch'd she and the gentleman above stairs, and overheard all their love discours

Ros. You don't say so?

Hodge. Ecod, I had like to have popp'd in among them this instant; but, by good luck, I heard Mrs Deborah's voice, and run down again, as fast as ever my legs could carry me.

Ros. Is your master in the house?

Hodge. What, his worship? No, no; he is gone into the fields, to talk with the reapers and people.

Ros. Poor Lucinda! I wish I could go up to her; but I am so engaged with my own affairs——

Hodge. Mrs Rosetta.

Ros. Well?

Hodge. Oddsbobs, I must have one smack of your sweet lips.

Ros. Oh, stand off; you know I never allow liberties.

Hodge. Nay, but why so coy? there's reason in roasting of eggs; I would not deny you such a thing.

Ros. That's kind: ha! ha! ha!—But what will become of Lucinda? Sir William waits for me; I must be gone. Friendship, a moment by your leave: yet, as our sufferings have been mutual, so shall our joys; I already lose the remembrance of all former pains and anxieties.

AIR XXXIV.

The traveller benighted,
And led thro' wearied ways,
The lamp of day new lighted,
With joy the dawn surveys.

The rising prospects viewing,
Each look is forward cast;
He smiles, his course pursuing,
Nor thinks of what is past. [Exit.

Hodge. Hist, stay! don't I hear a noise?

Lucin. [*Within.*] Well, but dear, dear aunt——

Mrs Deb. [*Within.*] You need not speak to me, for it does not signify.

Hodge. Adwawns, they are coming here! ecod, I'll get out of the way—Murrain take it, this door is bolted now—So, so.

Enter MRS DEBORAH, *driving in* LUCINDA.

Mrs Deb. Get along, get along; you are a scandal to the name of Woodcock; but I was resolved to find you out, for I have suspected you a great while, though your father, silly man, will have you such a poor innocent.

Lucin. What shall I do?

Mrs Deb. I was determined to discover what you and your pretended music-master were about, and lay in wait on purpose: I believe he thought to escape me, by slipping into the closet when I knocked at the door; but I was even with him, for now I have him under lock and key, and, please the fates, there he shall remain till your father comes in: I will convince him of his error, whether he will or not.

Lucin. You won't be so cruel: I am sure you won't:

I thought I had made you my friend by telling you the truth.

Mrs Deb. Telling me the truth, quotha! did I not overhear your scheme of running away to-night, through the partition? did not I find the very bundles pack'd up in the room with you, ready for going off? No, brazenface, I found out the truth by my own sagacity, though your father says I am a fool; but now we'll be judged who is the greatest;—and you, Mr Rascal, my brother shall know what an honest servant he has got.

Hodge. Madam!

Mrs Deb. You were to have been aiding and assisting them in their escape, and have been the go-between, it seems, the letter-carrier!

Hodge. Who me, madam?

Mrs Deb. Yes, you sirrah.

Hodge. Miss Lucinda, did I ever carry a letter for you? I'll make my affidavy before his worship——

Mrs Deb. Go, go, you are a villain; hold your tongue.

Lucin. I own, aunt, I have been very faulty in this affair; I don't pretend to excuse myself; but we are all subject to frailties; consider that, and judge of me by yourself; you were once young and inexperienced as I am.

AIR XXXV.

If ever a fond inclination
Rose in your bosom to rob you of rest;
Reflect with a little compassion,
On the soft pangs, which prevail in my breast.
Oh where, where would you fly me?
Can you deny me thus torn and distrest?
Think, when my lover was by me,
Wou'd I, how cou'd I, refuse his request?

Kneeling before you, let me implore you;
Look on me sighing, crying, dying;
Ah! is there no language can move?
If I have been too complying,
Hard was the conflict 'twixt duty and love.

Mrs. Deb. This is mighty pretty romantic stuff! but you learn it out of your play-books and novels. Girls in my time had other employments; we worked at our needles, and kept ourselves from idle thoughts: before I was your age, I had finished with my own fingers, a complete set of chairs, and a fire-screen in ten-stitch! four counterpanes in Marseilles quilting; and the Creed and the Ten Commandments, in the hair of our family: it was framed and glazed, and hung over the parlour chimney-piece, and your poor dear grandfather was prouder of it than of e'er a picture in his house. I never looked into a book, but when I said my prayers, except it was the Complete Housewife, or the great family receipt-book: whereas you are always at your studies! Ah, I never knew a woman come to good that was fond of reading.

Lucin. Well, pray, madam, let me prevail on you to give me the key, to let Mr Eustace out, and I promise, I never will proceed a step farther in this business without your advice and approbation.

Mrs Deb. Have not I told you already my resolution?—Where are my clogs and my bonnet? I'll go out to my brother in the fields; I'm a fool, you know, child: now let's see what the wits will think of themselves—Don't hold me——

Lucin. I'm not going;—I have thought of a way to be even with you, so you may do as you please.

[*Exeunt different Ways.*

Hodge. Well, I thought it would come to this; I'll be shot if I didn't—So, here's a fine job—But what can they do to me?—They can't send me to jail for carrying a letter, seeing there was no treason in it;

and how was I obligated to know my master did not allow of their meetings?—The worst they can do is to turn me off, and I am sure the place is no such great purchase—indeed, I should be sorry to leave Mrs Rosetta, seeing as how matters are so near being brought to an end betwixt us; but she and I may keep company all as one; and I find Madge has been speaking with Gaffer Broadwheels, the waggoner, about her carriage up to London: so that I have got rid of she; and I am sure I have reason to be main glad of it, for she led me a wearisome life—But that's the way of them all.

AIR XXXVI.

A plague on those wenches, they make such a pother,
When once they have let'n a man have his will;
They're always a whining for something or other,
And cry he's unkind in his carriage.
What tho'f he speaks them ne'er so fairly,
Still they keep teazing, teazing on:
You cannot persuade 'em;
Till promise you've made 'em;
And after they've got it,
They tell you——add rot it,
Their character's blasted, they're ruin'd, undone;
And then to be sure, sir,
There is but one cure, sir,
And all their discourse is of marriage.

SCENE II.

A Green-house.

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mead. I am glad I had the precaution to bring this suit of clothes in my bundle, though I hardly

know myself in them again, they appear so strange, and feel so unwieldy. However, my gardener's jacket goes on no more.—I wonder this girl does not come—[*Looking at his Watch.*]—Perhaps she won't come—Why, then, I'll go into the village, take a post-chaise, and depart without any farther ceremony.

AIR XXXVII.

How much superior beauty awes,
The coldest bosoms find:
But with resistless force it draws,
To sense and sweetness join'd.
The casket, where, to outward show,
The workman's art is seen,
Is doubly valued, when we know
It holds a gem within.

Hark! she comes.

Enter SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS *and* HAWTHORN.

Confusion! my father! What can this mean?

Sir. Will. Tom, are not you a sad boy, Tom, to bring me an hundred and forty miles here?—May I never do an ill turn, but you deserve to have your head broke; and I have a good mind, partly—What, sirrah! don't you think it worth your while to speak to me?

Y. Mead. Forgive me, sir; I own I have been in a fault.

Sir Will. In a fault! to run away from me, because I was going to do you good—May I never do an ill turn, Mr Hawthorn, if I did not pick out as fine a girl for him, partly, as any in England; and the rascal run away from me, and came here and turn'd gardener. And pray, what did you propose to yourself, Tom? I know you were always fond of Botany, as they call it; did you intend to keep the

trade going, and advertise fruit-trees and flowering-shrubs, to be had at Meadows's nursery?

Hawth. No, Sir William, I apprehend the young gentleman designed to lay by the profession; for he has quitted the habit already.

Y. Mead. I am so astonished to see you here, sir, that I don't know what to say; but I assure you, if you had not come, I should have returned home to you directly. Pray, sir, how did you find me out?

Sir Will. No matter, Tom, no matter; it was partly by accident, as a body may say; but what does that signify—tell me, boy, how stands your stomach towards matrimony? do you think you could digest a wife now?

Y. Mead. Pray, sir, don't mention it: I shall always behave myself as a dutiful son ought; I will never marry without your consent, and I hope you won't force me to do it against my own.

Sir Will. Is not this mighty provoking, Master Hawthorn? Why, sirrah, did you ever see the lady I designed for you?

Y. Mead. Sir, I don't doubt the lady's merit; but at present I am not disposed——

Hawth. Nay, but, young gentleman, fair and softly, you should pay some respect to your father in this matter.

Sir Will. Respect, Master Hawthorn, I tell you he shall marry her, or I'll disinherit him! there's once. Look you, Tom, not to make any more words of the matter, I have brought the lady here with me, and I'll see you contracted before we part; or you shall delve and plant cucumbers as long as you live.

Y. Mead. Have you brought the lady here, sir? I am sorry for it.

Sir Will. Why sorry? what then you won't marry her? we'll see that! Pray, Master Hawthorn, conduct the fair one in.——Ay, sir, you may fret, and dance

about, trot at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, if you please, but marry, whip me, I'm resolved.

Hawth. Here is the lady, Sir William.

Enter ROSETTA.

Sir Will. Come in, madam, but turn your face from him—he would not marry you, because he had not seen you: but I'll let him know my choice shall be his, and he shall consent to marry you before he sees you, or not an acre of estate—Pray, sir, walk this way.

Y. Mead. Sir, I cannot help thinking your conduct a little extraordinary; but since you urge me so closely, I must tell you my affections are engaged.

Sir Will. How, Tom, how?

Y. Mead. I was determined, sir, to have got the better of my inclination, and never have done a thing which I knew would be disagreeable to you.

Sir Will. And pray, sir, who are your affections engaged to? Let me know that.

Y. Mead. To a person, sir, whose rank and fortune may be no recommendations to her; but whose charms and accomplishments entitle her to a monarch. I am sorry, sir, it's impossible for me to comply with your commands, and I hope you will not be offended if I quit your presence.

Sir Will. Not I, not in the least; go about your business.

Y. Mead. Sir, I obey.

Hawth. Now, madam, is the time.

[ROSETTA *advances,* YOUNG MEADOWS *turns round, and sees her.*

Sir Will. Well, Tom, will you go away from me now?

Hawth. Perhaps, Sir William, your son does not like the lady; and if so, pray don't put a force upon his inclination.

Y. *Mead.* You need not have taken this method, sir, to let me see you are acquainted with my folly, whatever my inclinations are.

Sir Will. Well, but, Tom, suppose I give my consent to your marrying this young woman?

Y. *Mead.* Your consent, sir! What is all this? Pray don't make a jest of me.

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn, Tom, if it is not truth; this is my friend's daughter.

Y. *Mead.* Sir!

Ros. Even so; 'tis very true indeed. In short, you have not been a more whimsical gentleman than I have a gentlewoman; but you see we are designed for one another, 'tis plain.

Y. *Mead.* I know not, madam, what I either hear or see; a thousand things are crowding on my imagination; while, like one just awakened from a dream, I doubt which is reality, which delusion.

Sir Will. Well, then, Tom, come into the air a bit, and recover yourself.

Y. *Mead.* Nay, dear sir, have a little patience; do you give her to me?

Sir Will. Give her to you! ay, that I do, and my blessing into the bargain.

Y. *Mead.* Then, sir, I am the happiest man in the world; I inquire no farther; here I fix the utmost limits of my hopes and happiness.

AIR XXXVIII.

Y. Mead. *All I wish in her obtaining,*
Fortune can no more impart;
Ros. *Let my eyes, my thoughts explaining,*
Speak the feelings of my heart.
Y. Mead. *Joy and pleasure never ceasing,*
Ros. *Love with length of years increasing,*
Together. *Thus my heart and hand surrender,*
Here my faith and truth I plight;
Constant still, and kind, and tender,
May our flames burn ever bright.

Hawth. 'Give you joy, sir; and you, fair lady——. And, under favour, I'll salute you too, if there's no fear of jealousy.

Y. Mead. And may I believe this?—Pr'ythee tell me, dear Rosetta.

Ros. Step into the house, and I'll tell you every thing—I must entreat the good offices of Sir William, and Mr Hawthorn, immediately; for I am in the utmost uneasiness about my poor friend Lucinda.

Hawth. Why, what's the matter?

Ros. I don't know, but I have reason to fear I left her just now in very disagreeable circumstances: however, I hope, if there's any mischief fallen out between her father and her lover——

Hawth. The music-master! I thought so.

Sir Will. What, is there a lover in the case? May I never do an ill turn, but I am glad, so I am; for we'll make a double wedding; and by way of celebrating it, take a trip to London, to show the brides some of the pleasures of the town. And, Master Hawthorn, you shall be of the party—Come, children, go before us.

Hawth. Thank you, Sir William; I'll go into the house with you, and to church to see the young folks married; but as to London, I beg to be excused.

AIR XXXIX.

If ever I'm catch'd in those regions of smoke,
That seat of confusion and noise,
May I ne'er know the sweets of a slumber unbroke,
Nor the pleasure the country enjoys;
Nay more, let them take me, to punish my sin,
Where, gaping, the Cockneys they fleece,
Clap me up with their monsters, cry, Master, walk in,
And show me for two-pence a piece.

[Exeunt.

SCENE III.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *Hall.*

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK, MRS DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, EUSTACE, *and* HODGE.

Mrs Deb. Why, brother, do you think *I* can hear, or see, or make use of my senses? *I* tell you, *I* left that fellow locked up in her closet; and, while I have been with you, they have broke open the door, and got him out again.

J. Wood. Well, you hear what they say.

Mrs Deb. I care not what they say; it's you encourage them in their impudence—Hark ye, hussy, will you face me down that I did not lock the fellow up?

Lucin. Really, aunt, I don't know what you mean; when you talk intelligibly I'll answer you.

Eust. Seriously, madam, this is carrying the jest a little too far.

Mrs Deb. What, then, I did not catch you together in her chamber, nor overhear your design of going off to-night, nor find the bundles packed up—

Eust. Ha, ha, ha.

Lucin. Why, aunt, you rave.

Mrs Deb. Brother, as I am a christian woman, she confessed the whole affair to me from first to last; and in this very place was down upon her marrow-bones for half an hour together, to beg I would conceal it from you.

Hodge. Oh lord! Oh lord!

Mrs Deb. What, sirrah! would you brazen me too? Take that. [*Boxes him.*

Hodge. I wish you would keep your hands to yourself: you strike me, because you have been telling his worship stories.

J. Wood. Why, sister, you are tipsy!

Mrs Deb. I tipsy, brother!—I—that never touch a drop of any thing strong from year's end to year's end, but now and then a little aniseed water, when I have got the cholic.

Lucin. Well, aunt, you have been complaining of the stomach ache all day; and may have taken too powerful a dose of your cordial.

J. Wood. Come, come, I see well enough how it is; this is a lie of her own invention, to make herself appear wise: but, you simpleton, did you not know I must find you out?

Enter SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, ROSETTA, *and* YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mead. Bless me, sir, look who is yonder.

Sir Will. Cocksbones, Jack, honest Jack, are you there?

Eust. Plague on't, this rencounter is unlucky—Sir William, your servant.

Sir Will. Your servant, again and again, heartily your servant;—may I never do an ill turn, but I am glad to meet you.

J. Wood. Pray, Sir William, are you acquainted with this person?

Sir Will. What, with Jack Eustace! why he's my kinsman: his mother and I were cousin Germans once removed; and Jack's a very worthy young fellow:—may I never do an ill turn, if I tell a word of a lie.

J. Wood. Well, but Sir William, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; this man is a music-master; a thrummer of wire, and a scraper of catgut, and teaches my daughter to sing.

Sir Will. What, Jack Eustace a music-master! no, no, I know him better.

Eust. 'Sdeath, why should I attempt to carry on this absurd farce any longer?—What that gentleman

tells you, is very true, sir; I am no music-master, indeed.

J. Wood. You are not, you own it then?

Eust. Nay, more, sir; I am as that lady represented me, [*Pointing to* MRS DEBORAH.] your daughter's lover; whom, with her own consent, I did intend to have carried off this night; but now that Sir William Meadows is here, to tell you who, and what I am, I throw myself upon your generosity, from which I expect greater advantages than I could reap from any imposition on your unsuspicious nature.

Mrs Deb. Well, brother, what have you to say for yourself now? you have made a precious day's work of it! Had my advice been taken—O, I am ashamed of you! but you are a weak man, and it can't be helped; however, you should let wiser heads direct you.

Lucin. Dear papa, pardon me.

Sir Will. Ay, do sir, forgive her;—my cousin Jack will make her a good husband, I'll answer for it.

Ros. Stand out of the way, and let me speak two or three words to his worship.—Come, my dear sir, though you refuse all the world, I am sure you can deny me nothing: love is a venial fault—you know what I mean.——Be reconciled to your daughter, I conjure you, by the memory of our past affections—What, not a word!

AIR XL.

Go, naughty man, I can't abide you;
Are then your vows so soon forgot?
Ah! now I see, if I had try'd you,
What would have been my hopeful lot.

But here I charge you—Make them happy,
Bless the fond pair, and crown their bliss.
Come, be a dear good-natured pappy,
And I'll reward you with a kiss.

Mrs Deb. Come, turn out of the house, and be thankful my brother does not hang you, for he could do it—he's a justice of peace:—turn out of the house I say——

J. Wood. Who gave you authority to turn him out of the house?—he shall stay where he is.

Mrs Deb. He sha'n't marry my niece.

J. Wood. Sha'n't he? but I'll show you the difference now; I say, he shall marry her, and what will you do about it?

Mrs Deb. And you will give him your estate too, will you?

J. Wood. Yes, I will.

Mrs Deb. Why, I'm sure he's a vagabond.

J. Wood. I like him the better, I would have him a vagabond.

Mrs Deb. Brother, brother!

Hawth. Come, come, madam, all's very well, and I see my neighbour is, what I always thought him, a man of sense and prudence.

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn, but I say so too.

J. Wood. Here, young fellow, take my daughter, and bless you both together; but hark you, no money till I die; observe that.

Eust. Sir, in giving me your daughter, you bestow upon me more than the whole world would be without her.

Hawth. Adds me, sir, here are some of your neighbours come to visit you, and I suppose to make up the company of your statute ball; yonder's music too, I see; shall we enjoy ourselves? If so, give me your hand.

J. Wood. Why, here's my hand, and we will enjoy ourselves; Heaven bless you both, children, I say—Sister Deborah, you are a fool.

Mrs Deb. You are a fool, brother; and m

words—But I'll give myself no more trouble about you.

Hawth. Fiddlers, strike up.

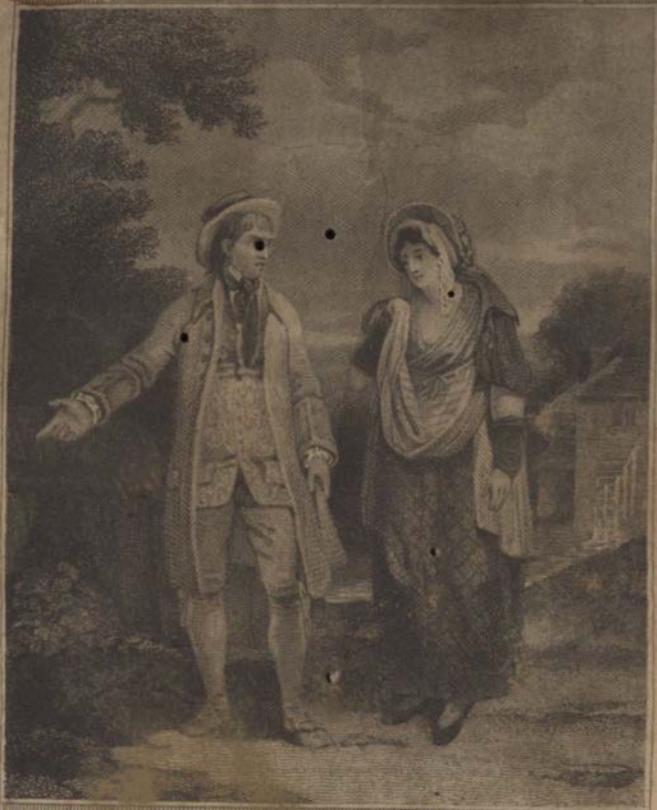
AIR XLI.

Hence with cares, complaints, and frowning,
Welcome jollity and joy;
Ev'ry grief in pleasure drowning,
Mirth this happy night employ:
Let's to friendship do our duty,
Laugh and sing some good old strain;
Drink a health to love and beauty—
May they long in triumph reign. [Exeu

THE END.

EDINBURGH:
Printed by James Ballantyne & Co.

MAID OF THE MILL



RALPH.—NO, NO; FOLLOW YOUR GENTLEMAN
ACT III. SCENE II.

Painted by Singleton. Published by Longman & C. March 1816. Engraved by C. Heath.

THE

MAID OF THE MILL;

A COMIC OPERA,

IN THREE ACTS;

By ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES ROYAL

DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN, PATERNOSTER ROW

LONDON:
PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

REMARKS.

THIS opera is the production of the author of "Love in a Village," and many other popular works.

In his dedication of "The Maid of the Mill" to his Royal Highness, William, the late Duke of Gloucester, the writer has endeavoured to vindicate the just claim of comic operas to be acknowledged for a junior offspring of the drama; and founds his argument upon the entertainment they give, the relief they afford to tragedies and comedies, and the example of the theatres in France, where, he boldly asserts, that "the stage has been cultivated with more care and success than in any other country."

The reader of this opera will observe, before he has proceeded far in the book, that the fable is taken from Richardson's famous novel of "Pamela." Characters and incidents are likewise borrowed from that well-known story, with the mere addition of a little dramatic art.

Ralph, and his vagrant companions, seem, indeed, exempt from this imitation, and to be creatures of the author's own imagination: but their origin is also from Richardson; for in the novel, Goodman Andrews is said to have once had an idle son; and there is a

trifling event in the latter part of that work, which, no doubt, gave birth to the introduction of the gipsies in this.

The love of Parson Williams for Pamela is here transferred to that of Farmer Giles for Patty: which causes the same degree of jealousy in Lord Aimworth, as it had before done in Mr B—; and the young lady of quality, to whom that gentleman was going to be married, through the persuasion of his sister, is ingeniously transformed into Theodosia—whose father and mother, somewhat irregularly, seem to derive their existence from her, yet to form a very natural and entertaining, though not a very elegant, part of the Drama.

Whether the catastrophe of the romance of "Pamela," and that of "The Maid of the Mill," considered as a moral, be likely to produce good or ill consequences, may possibly admit of some dispute; for, though it, most laudably, teaches man to marry where his heart is fixed, it unfortunately encourages woman to fix hers where ambition alone may direct her choice; or where, sometimes, her hopes ought never to aspire.

The original equalizing occurrence, which takes place at the conclusion of Richardson's novel, was the delight of every reader at the time that book was first published, and for some years after; but when admiration began to abate, ridicule was substituted in its stead; and a marriage for love, contracted by a man of quality, with his inferior in birth and fortune, was, with poor Pamela's preferment, held in the highest contempt.

Of late years, the English nation has again changed its sentiments; and the vast number of women elevated to high rank in this kingdom, since the French revolution took place, might almost draw upon their husbands the vulgar charge of jacobinism.—But love was among the passions let loose on that tremendous event, and perhaps the only one which has yet made its way, and triumphs, here.

This opera was first acted in 1765, and was most favourably received.

Richardson, though no dramatist, has furnished materials for favourite dramas, in his Pamela, to almost every nation in Europe. In Italy and France particularly, several writers, of the first eminence, have chosen this novel for the subject of various theatrical exhibitions.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY-LANE.	COVENT-GARDEN.
LORD AIMWORTH	*Mr. Kelly.*	*Mr. Johnstone.*
SIR HARRY SYCAMORE	*Mr. Suett.*	*Mr. Quick.*
RALPH	*Mr. Wathen.*	*Mr. Munden.*
MERVIN	*Mr. Trueman.*	*Mr. Townshend.*
FAIRFIELD	*Mr. Aickin.*	*Mr. Richardson.*
FARMER GILES	*Mr. Sedgwick.*	*Mr. Haymes.*
GIPSY	*Mr. Webb.*	
FANNY	*Mrs. Bland.*	*Mrs. Martyr.*
THEODOSIA	*Miss Leak.*	*Mrs. Clendining.*
PATTY	*Miss Stephens.*	*Mrs. Mountain.*
LADY SYCAMORE	*Mrs. Walcot.*	*Mrs. Davenport.*
GIPSY	*Mrs. Chippendale.*	

THE

MAID OF THE MILL.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A rural Prospect, with a Mill at work. Several people employed about it; on one side, a House, PATTY *reading at the Window; on the other, a Barn, where* FANNY *sits mending a net; some* GIPSIES. GILES *appears, at a Distance, in the Mill;* FAIRFIELD *and* RALPH *taking sacks from a Cart.*

SONG.—FAIRFIELD.

The great folks are noble, and proud let them be,
Of title, of honour, of wealth;
That I am a Briton is title to me,
And I'm rich in a stock of good health.
Lads, stop the mill;
Be the hopper still;
When low the sun,
The work is done.
Then we'll sit at our homely board with glee,
For sweet is the bread of industry.

Though, in summer, I copied the provident ant,
For winter some grains to provide;
Yet what I could spare to a friend, when in want,
I ne'er was the friend who denied.
Lads stop the mill, &c.

Fair. Well done, well done; 'tis a sure sign work goes on merrily, when folks sing at it. Stop the mill there; and, dost hear, son Ralph? hoist your sacks of flour upon this cart, lad, and drive it up to Lord Aimworth's; coming from London last night, with strange company, no doubt, there are calls enough for it by this time. Ralph, why don't you go, and do the things I bid you?

Ralph. Ay, feither, there's no doubt but you'll find enow for a body to do.

Fair. What, dost mutter? Is't not a strange plague that thou canst never go about any thing with a good will? murrain take it, what's come o'er the boy? So then, thou wilt not set a hand to what I have desired thee?

Ralph. Why don't you speak to suster Pat to do something then? I thought when she came home to us, after my old lady's death, she was to have been of some use in the house; but, instead of that, she sits there all day, reading outlandish books, dressed like a fine madumasel, and the never a word you says to she.

Fair. Sirrah! don't speak so disrespectfully of thy sister; thou wilt never have the tithe of her deserts.

Ralph. Why, I'll read and write with her, for what she dares; and as for playing on the hapsicols, I thinks her rich godmother might have learned her something properer, seeing she did not remember to leave her a legacy at last. A farmer's wife painting pictures, and playing on the hapsicols! why, I'll be hanged now, for all as old as she is, if she knows any more about milking a cow, than I do of sewing a petticoat.

Fair. Ralph, thou hast been drinking this morning.

Ralph. Well, if so be as I have, it's nothing out of your pocket, nor mine's neither.

Fair. Who has given thee liquor, sirrah?

Ralph. Why, it was wind—a gentleman guve me.

Fair. A gentleman!

Ralph. Yes, a gentleman that's come piping hot from London: he is below, at the Cat and Bagpipes—Icod, he rides a choice bit of a nag; I dare to say, she'd fetch as good as forty pound, at ever a fair in all England.

Fair. A fig's end for what she'd fetch! mind thy business, or by the lord Harry——

Ralph. Why, I won't do another hand's turn today now; so that's flat.

Fair. Thou wilt not——

Ralph. Why, no, I won't; so what argufies your putting yourself in a passion, feyther? I've promised to go back to the gentleman; and I don't know but what he's a lord too, and mayhap he may do more for me than you thinks of.

Fair. Well, son Ralph, run thy gait; but, remember, I tell thee, thou wilt repent this untowardness.

Ralph. Why, how shall I repent it? Mayhap, you'll turn me out of your service; a match, with all hearts—Icod, I don't care three brass pins.

AIR.

If that's all you want, who the plague will be sorry?
'Twere better, by half, to dig stones in a quarry;
For my share, I'm weary of what is got by it:
S'flesh, here's such a racket! such scolding and coiling!
You're never content but when folks are a-toiling,
And drudging, like horses, from morning till night.

You think I'm afraid, but, the diff'rence to show you,
First, yonder's your shovel; your sacks too, I throw you;
Henceforward, take care of your matters who will;
They're welcome to slave for your wages who need 'em;
Tol, lol de rol lol, I have purchased my freedom,
And never, hereafter, shall work at the mill. [Exit.

Fair. Dear heart, dear heart! I protest, this ungracious boy puts me quite beside myself! Patty, my dear, come down into the yard a little, and keep me company; and you, thieves, vagabonds, gipsies, out here! 'tis you debauch my son.

[*Exit, driving out the* GIPSIES.

Enter PATTY, *from the Mill.*

AIR.—PATTY.

In love to pine and languish,
Yet know your passion vain;
To harbour heartfelt anguish,
Yet fear to tell your pain—

What pow'rs unrelenting,
Severer ills inventing,
Can sharpen pangs like these?
Where days and nights tormenting,
Yield not a moment's ease.

Enter FAIRFIELD.

Fair. Well, Patty, Master Goodman, my lord's steward, has been with me just now, and I find we are like to have great doings: his lordship has brought down Sir Harry Sycamore, and his family, and there is more company expected in a few days.

Patty. I know Sir Harry very well: he is, by marriage, a distant relation of my lord's.

Fair. Pray, what sort of a young body is the daughter there? I think she used to be with you at the castle, three or four summers ago, when my young lord was out upon his travels.

Patty. Oh, very often; she was a great favourite of my lady's: pray, father, is she come down?

Fair. By what I can learn, she is; and there is likely to be a nearer relationship between the families, ere long. It seems, his lordship was not over willing for the match, but the friends, on both sides, in London, pressed it so hard!—then there's a swinging fortune! Master Goodman tells me, a matter of twenty or thirty thousand pounds.

Patty. If it was a million, father, it would not be more than my Lord Aimworth deserves: I suppose the wedding will be celebrated here, at the mansion house.

Fair. So it is thought, as soon as things can be properly prepared—And now, Patty, if I could but see thee a little merry—Come, bless thee, pluck up thy spirits—To be sure, thou hast sustained, in the death of thy lady, a heavy loss; she was a parent to thee; nay, and better, inasmuch as she took thee when thou wert but a babe, and gave thee an education which thy natural parents could not afford to do.

Patty. Ah! dear father, don't mention what, perhaps, has been my greatest misfortune.

Fair. Nay, then, Patty, what's become of all thy sense, that people talk so much about?—But I have something to say to thee, which I would have thee consider seriously—There is our neighbour, Farmer Giles: he is a sober, honest, industrious young fellow, and one of the wealthiest in these parts; he is greatly taken with thee, and it is not the first time I have told thee, I should be glad to have him for a son-in-law.

Patty. And I have told you as often, father, I

would submit myself entirely to your direction;—whatever you think proper for me is so.

Fair. Why, that's spoken like a dutiful, sensible girl; get thee in then, and leave me to manage it.

[*Exit* PATTY.

Enter GILES.

Giles. Well, Master Fairfield, you and Miss Pat have had a long discourse together! Did you tell her that I was come down?

Fair. No, in truth, friend Giles; but I mentioned our affair at a distance; and I think there is no fear.

Giles. That's right—and when shall us—you do know, I have told you my mind, often and often.

Fair. Farmer, give us thy hand; nobody doubts thy goodwill to me and my girl; and you may take my word, I would rather give her to thee than another, for I am main certain thou wilt make her a good husband.

Giles. Thanks to your kind opinion, Master Fairfield; if such be my hap, I hope there will be no cause of complaint.

Fair. And I promise thee my daughter will make thee a choice wife. But thou know'st, friend Giles, that I, and all belongs to me, have great obligations to Lord Aimworth's family; Patty, in particular, would be one of the most ungrateful wretches this day breathing, if she was to do the smallest thing, contrary to their consent and approbation.

Giles. Nay, nay, 'tis well enough known to all the country she was the old lady's darling.

Fair. Well, Master Giles, I'll assure thee she is not one whit less obliged to my lord himself. When his mother was taken off so suddenly, and his affairs called him up to London, if Patty would have remained at the castle, she might have had the command of all: or, if she would have gone any where

else, he would have paid for her fixing, let the cost be what it would.

Giles. Why, for that matter, folks did not spare to say, that my lord had a sort of a sneaking kindness for her himself; and I remember at one time it was rife all about the neighbourhood, that she was actually to be our lady.

Fair. Pho, pho! a pack of woman's tales!

Giles. Nay, to be sure, they'll say any thing.

Fair. My lord's a man of a better way of thinking, friend Giles—But this is neither here nor there to our business. Have you been at the castle yet?

Giles. Who, I? Bless your heart, I did not hear a syllable of his lordship's being come down, till your lad told me.

Fair. No! why then, go up to my lord, let him know you have a mind to make a match with my daughter—hear what he has to say to it; and, afterwards, we will try if we can't settle matters.

Giles. Go up to my lord! Icod, if that be all, I'll do it with the biggest pleasure in life.—But where's Miss Pat? Might one not ax her how she do?

Fair. Never spare it; she's within there.

Giles. I sees her—odd rabbit it, this hatch is locked now——Miss Pat! Miss Patty!—She makes believe not to hear me.

Fair. Well, well, never mind; thou'lt come and eat a morsel of dinner with us?

Giles. Nay, but just to have a bit of a joke with her at present—Miss Pat, I say! won't you open the door?

AIR.

Hark! 'tis I, your own true lover.
After walking three long miles,
One kind look, at least, discover,
Come, and speak a word to Giles.

You, alone, my heart I fix on:
Ah, you little cunning vixen!
I can see your roguish smiles.
Addslids! my mind is so possess'd,
Till we're sped, I sha'n't have rest;
Only say, the thing 's a bargain,
Here, an you like it,
Ready to strike it,
There's at once an end of arguing:
I'm here, she's mine;
Thus we seal, and thus we sign. [Exit.

Enter PATTY.

Fair. Patty, child, why wouldst thou not open the door, for our neighbour Giles?

Patty. Really, father, I did not know what was the matter.

Fair. Well, another time; he'll be here again presently. He's gone up to the castle, Patty;—thou know'st it would not be right for us to do any thing without giving his lordship intelligence, so I have sent the farmer, to let him know that he is willing, and we are willing; and, with his lordship's approbation——

Patty. Oh, dear father!—what are you going to say?

Fair. Nay, child, I would not have stirred a step for fifty pounds, without advertising his lordship before hand.

Patty. But surely, surely, you have not done this rash, this precipitate thing.

Fair. How, rash? how is it rash, Patty?—I don't understand thee.

Patty. Oh, you have distressed me beyond imagination!—but why would you not give me notice—speak to me first?

Fair. Quiet thyself, Patty, and thou'lt see all this will turn out for the best. [*Exit.*

Patty. What will become of me?—my lord will certainly imagine this is done with my consent—— Well, is he not himself going to be married to a lady, suitable to him in rank, suitable to him in fortune, as this farmer is to me; and under what pretence can I refuse the husband my father has found for me? Shall I say that I have dared to raise my inclinations above my condition, and presumed to love, where my duty taught me only gratitude and respect? Alas! who could live in the house with Lord Aimworth, see him, converse with him, and not love him! I have this consolation, however, my folly is yet undiscovered to any; else, how should I, be ridiculed and despised! nay, would not my lord himself despise me; especially, if he knew that I have more than once construed his natural affability and politeness into sentiments as unworthy of him, as mine are bold and extravagant. Unexampled vanity! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Room in LORD AIMWORTH'S *House.*

SIR HARRY SYCAMORE *and* THEODOSIA.

Sir Harry. Well, but, Theodosia, child, you are quite unreasonable.

Theod. Pardon me, papa, it is not I am unreasonable: when I gave way to my inclinations for Mr. Mervin, he did not seem less agreeable to you and to my mamma, than he was acceptable to me. It is therefore you have been unreasonable, in first encouraging his addresses, and afterwards forbidding

him your house; in order to bring me down here, to force me on a gentleman——

Sir Harry. Force you, Dossy! what do you mean? By the la, I would not force you on the Czar of Muscovy!

Theod. And yet, papa, what else can I call it? for though Lord Aimworth is extremely attentive and obliging, I assure you he is by no means one of the most ardent of lovers.

Sir Harry. Ardent, ah! there it is: you girls never think there is any love without kissing and hugging; but you should consider, child, my Lord Aimworth is a polite man, and has been abroad in France and Italy, where these things are not the fashion. I remember when I was on my travels, among the madames and signoras, we never saluted more than the tip of the ear.

Theod. Really, papa, you have a very strange opinion of my delicacy: I had no such stuff in my thoughts.

Sir Harry. Well, come, my poor Dossy, I see you are chagrined; but you know it is not my fault: on the contrary, I assure you, I had always a great regard for young Mervin, and should have been very glad——

Theod. How then, papa, could you join in forcing me to write him that strange letter, never to see me more; or how indeed could I comply with your commands? What must he think of me?

Sir Harry. Ay, but hold, Dossy; your mamma convinced me that he was not so proper a son-in-law for us as Lord Aimworth.

Theod. Convinced you! ah, my dear papa, you were not convinced.

Sir Harry. What, don't I know when I am convinced?

Theod. Why no, papa; because your good nature and easiness of temper is such, that you pay more

respect to the judgment of mamma, and less to your own, that you ought to do.

Sir Harry. Well, but, Dossy, don't you see how your mamma loves me? if my finger does but ache, she's like a bewitched woman; and if I was to die, I don't believe she would outlive the burying of me: nay, she has told me as much herself!

Theod. Her fondness indeed is very extraordinary.

Sir Harry. Besides, could you give up the prospect of being a countess, and mistress of this fine place?

Theod. Yes, truly could I.

AIR.

With the man that I love, was I destined to dwell
On a mountain, a moor, in a cot, in a cell,
Retreats, the most barren, most desert, would be
More pleasing than courts or a palace to me.

Let the vain and the venal, in wedlock aspire,
To what folly esteems, and the vulgar admire;
I yield them the bliss, where their wishes are placed,
Insensible creatures! 'tis all they can taste.

Enter LADY SYCAMORE.

Lady S. Sir Harry, where are you?

Sir Harry. Here, my lamb.

Lady S. I am just come from looking over his lordship's family trinkets.—Well, Miss Sycamore, you are a happy creature, to have diamonds, equipage, title, all the blessings of life poured thus upon you at once!

Theod. Blessings, madam! Do you think then I am such a wretch as to place my felicity in the possession of any such trumpery?

Lady S. Upon my word, miss, you have a very disdainful manner of expressing yourself. I believe there are very few young women of fashion, who would

think any sacrifice they could make too much for them.—Did you ever hear the like of her, Sir Harry?

Sir Harry. Why, my dear, I have just been talking to her in the same strain, but whatever she has got in her head——

Lady S. Oh, it is Mr. Mervin, her gentleman of Bucklersbury.—Fie, miss! marry a cit! Where is your pride, your vanity? have you nothing of the person of distinction about you?

Sir Harry. Well, but my lady, you know I am a piece of a cit myself, as I may say, for my great grandfather was a dry-salter.

Theod. And yet, madam, you condescended to marry my papa.

Lady S. Well, if I did, miss, I had but five thousand pounds to my portion; and Sir Harry knows I was past eight and thirty before I would listen to him.

Sir Harry. Nay, Dossy, that's true; your mamma own'd eight and thirty, before we were married; but, by the la, my dear, you were a lovely angel! and, by candle-light, nobody would have taken you for above five and twenty.

Lady S. Sir Harry, you remember the last time I was at my lord duke's?

Sir Harry. Yes, my love, it was the very day your little bitch, Minxey, pupp'd.

Lady S. And, pray, what did the whole family say; my Lord John, and my Lord Thomas, and my Lady Duchess, in particular? Cousin, says her grace to me——for she always called me cousin——

Theod. Well, but, madam, to cut this matter short at once, my father has a great regard for Mr. Mervin, and would consent to our union, with all his heart.

Lady S. Do you say so, Sir Harry?

Sir Harry. Who? I, love!

Lady S. Then all my care and prudence are come to nothing!

Sir Harry. Well, but stay, my lady—Dossy, you are always making mischief.

Theod. Ah! my dear, sweet——

Lady S. Do, miss; that's right; coax——

Theod. No, madam, I am not capable of any such meanness.

Lady S. 'Tis very civil of you to contradict me, however!

Sir Harry. Eh! what's that?—Hands off, Dossy! don't come near me.

AIR.

Why, how now, miss, Pert,
Do you think to divert
My anger, by fawning and stroking?
Would you make me a fool,
Your plaything, your tool?
Was ever young minx so provoking?
Get out of my sight,
'Twould be serving you right,
To lay a sound dose of the lash on.
Contradict your mamma!
I've a mind, by the la!
But I won't put myself in a passion.

[*Exit* THEODOSIA.

Enter LORD AIMWORTH *and* GILES.

Lord A. Come, Farmer; you may come in; there are none here but friends.—Sir Harry, your servant.

Sir Harry. My lord, I kiss your lordship's hands. —I hope he did not overhear us squabbling. [*Aside.*

Lord A. Well, now, Master Giles, what is it you have got to say to me? If I can do you any service, this company will give you leave to speak.

Giles. I thank your lordship; I has not a great deal to say; I do come to your lordship about a little business, if you'll please to give me the hearing.

Lord A. Certainly, only let me know what it is.

Giles. Why, an please you, my lord, being left alone, as I may say, feyther dead, and all the business upon my own hands, I do think of settling, and taking a wife, and am come to ax your honour's consent.

Lord A. My consent, Farmer! if that be necessary, you have it with all my heart.—I hope you have taken care to make a prudent choice?

Giles. Why, I do hope so, my lord.

Lord A. Well, and who is the happy fair one? Does she live in my house?

Giles. No, my lord, she does not live in your house; but she's a parson of your acquaintance.

Lord A. Of my acquaintance!

Giles. No offence, I hope, your honour?

Lord A. None in the least: but how is she an acquaintance of mine?

Giles. Your lordship do know Miller Fairfield?

Lord A. Well——

Giles. And Patty Fairfield, his daughter, my lord?

Lord A. Ay, is it her you think of marrying?

Giles. Why, if so be as your lordship has no objection; to be sure, we will do nothing without your consent and approbation.

Lord A. Upon my word, Farmer, you have made an excellent choice.—It is a god-daughter of my mother's, madam, who was bred up under her care, and I protest I do not know a more amiable young woman.—But are you sure, Farmer, that Patty herself is inclinable to this match?

Giles. O yes, my lord, I am sartin of that.

Lord A. Perhaps, then, she desired you to come and ask my consent?

Giles. Why, as far as this here, my lord; to be sure, the miller did not care to publish the banns without making your lordship acquainted—But I hope your honour's not angry with I?

Lord A. Angry, Farmer! why should you think so?—What interest have I in it to be angry?

Sir Harry. And so, honest Farmer, you are going to be married to little Patty Fairfield? She is an old acquaintance of mine. How long have you and she been sweethearts?

Giles. Not a long while, an please your worship.

Sir Harry. Well, her father's a good warm fellow: I suppose you take care that she brings something to make the pot boil?

Lady S. What does that concern you, Sir Harry? how often must I tell you of meddling in other people's affairs?

Sir Harry. My lord, a penny for your thoughts.

Lord A. I beg your pardon, Sir Harry; upon my word, I did not think where I was.

Giles. Well, then, your honour, I'll make bold to be taking my leave: I may say you gave consent for Miss Patty and I to go on?

Lady A. Undoubtedly, Farmer, if she approves of it: but are you not afraid that her education has rendered her a little unsuitable for a wife for you?

Lady S. Oh, my lord, if the girl's handy——

Sir Harry. Oh, ay—when a girl's handy——

Giles. Handy! Why, saving respect, there's nothing comes amiss to her; she's cute at every varsal kind of thing.

AIR.

Odd's my life, search England over,
An you match her in her station,
I'll be bound to fly the nation:
And, be sure, as well I love her.

Do but feel my heart a-beating,
Still her pretty name repeating,

Here's the work 'tis always at,
Pitty, patty, pat, pit, pat.

When she makes the music tinkle,
What on earth can sweeter be?
Then her little eyes so twinkle,
'Tis a feast to hear and see. [Exit.

Sir Harry. By dad, this is a good merry fellow; is not he in love, with his pitty patty?——And so, my lord, you have given your consent that he shall marry your mother's old housekeeper? Ah, well, I can see——

Lord A. Nobody doubts, Sir Harry, that you are very clear-sighted.

Sir Harry. Yes, yes, let me alone; I know what's what: I was a young fellow once myself; and I should have been glad of a tenant, to take a pretty girl off my hands now and then, as well as another.

Lord A. I protest, my dear friend, I don't understand you.

Lady S. Nor nobody else—Sir Harry, you are going at some beastliness now.

Sir Harry. Who? I, my lady! Not I, as I hope to live and breathe! 'tis nothing to us, you know, what my lord does before he's married: when I was a bachelor, I was a devil among the wenches myself; and yet I vow to George, my lord, since I knew my Lady Sycamore, and we shall be man and wife eighteen years, if we live till next Candlemas-day, I never had to do——

Lady S. Sir Harry, come out of the room, I desire.

Sir Harry. Why, what's the matter, my lady? I did not say any harm.

Lady S. I see what you are driving at; you want to make me faint.

Sir Harry. I want to make you faint, my lady!

Lady S. Yes, you do—and if you don't come out this instant I shall fall down in the chamber.—I beg, my lord, you won't speak to him.—Will you come out, Sir Harry?

Sir Harry. Nay, but my lady!

Lady S. No, I will have you out. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Outside of the Mill.

Enter RALPH, *with* MERVIN, *in a Riding Dress, followed by* FANNY.

Fanny. Ah, pray your honour, try if you have not something to spare for poor Fanny, the gipsy.

Ralph. I tell you, Fan, the gentleman has no change about him: why the plague will you be so troublesome?

Fanny. Lord, what is it to you, if his honour has a mind to give me a trifle? Do, pray, gentleman, put your hand in your pocket.

Mervin. I am almost distracted! Ungrateful Theodosia, to change so suddenly, and write me such a letter! However, I am resolved to have my dismission face to face. This letter may be forced from her by her mother, who, I know, was never cordially my friend: I could not get a sight of her in London, but here they will be less on their guard; and see her I will, by one means or other.

Fanny. Then your honour will not extend your charity.

AIR.

I am young and I am friendless,
And poor, alas! withal;
Sure my sorrows will be endless;
In vain for help I call.
Have some pity in your nature,
To relieve a wretched creature,
Though the gift be ne'er so small.
[MERVIN *gives her Money.*

May you, possessing every blessing,
Still inherit, sir, all you merit, sir,
And never know what 'tis to want;
Sweet Heaven, your worship all happiness grant.
[Exit.

Ralph. Now I'll go and take that money from her; and I have a good mind to lick her, so I have.

Mervin. Pho! pr'ythee, stay where you are.

Ralph. Nay, but I hate to see a toad so devilish greedy.

Mervin. Well, come, she has not got a great deal, and I have thought how she may do me a favour in her turn.

Ralph. Ay, but you may put that out of your head, for I can tell you she won't.

Mervin. How so?

Ralph. How so! why, she's as cunning as the devil.

Mervin. Oh, she is!—I fancy I understand you. Well, in that case, friend Ralph—Your name's Ralph, I think?

Ralph. Yes, sir, at your service, for want of a better.

Mervin. I say, then, friend Ralph, in that case, we will remit the favour you think of, till the lady is in

a more complying humour, and try if she cannot serve me at present in some other capacity.—There are a good many gipsies hereabout, are there not?

Ralph. Softly—I have a whole gang of them here in our barn; I have kept them about the place these three months, and all on account of she.

Mervin. Really!

Ralph. Yea,—but for your life don't say a word of it to any christian—I am in love with her.

Mervin. Indeed!

Ralph. Feyther is as mad with me about it as Old Scratch; and I gets the plague and all of anger; but I don't mind that.

Mervin. Well, friend Ralph, if you are in love, no doubt you have some influence over your mistress: don't you think you could prevail upon her, and her companions, to supply me with one of their habits, and let me go up with them to-day to my Lord Aimworth's?

Ralph. Why, do you want to go a mumming? We never do that but in the Christmas holidays.

Mervin. No matter: manage this for me, and manage it with secrecy; and I promise you shall not go unrewarded.

Ralph. Oh! as for that, sir, I don't look for any thing; I can easily get you a bundle of their rags; but I don't know whether you'll prevail on them to go up to my lord's, because they're afraid of a big dog that's in the yard; but I'll tell you what I can do; I can go up before you, and have the dog fastened, for I know his kennel.

Mervin. That will do very well. [*Exit* RALPH]—By means of this disguise, I shall probably get a sight of her; and I leave the rest to love and fortune.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Outside of the Mill.

Enter PATTY, RALPH, GILES, *and* FANNY.

Giles. So his lordship was as willing as the flowers in May——and as I was coming along, who should I meet but your father—and he bid me run in all haste, and tell you—for we were sure you would be deadly glad.

Patty. I know not what business you had to go to my lord's at all, Farmer.

Giles. Nay, I only did as I was desired——Master Fairfield bid me tell you moreover, as how he would have you go up to my lord out of hand, and thank him.

Ralph. So she ought; and take off those clothes, and put on what's more becoming her station; you know my father spoke to you of that this morning too.

Patty. Brother, I shall obey my father.

AIR.

Lie still my heart; oh! fatal stroke,
That kills at once my hopes and me!

Giles. *Miss Pat!*
Patty. ——— *What?*
Giles. ——— *Nay, I only spoke:*
Ralph. *Take courage, mon, she does but joke.*
Come, sustir, somewhat kinder be.

Fanny. *This is a thing the most oddest;*
Some folks are so plaguily modest:
Ralph. and Fanny. *Were we in the case,*
To be in their place,
We'd carry it off with a different face.
Giles. *Thus I take her by the lily hand,*
So soft and white.
Ralph. ——— *Why, now that's right;*
And kiss her too, mon, never stand.

Patty and Giles. *What words can explain*
My pleasure—my pain?
It presses, it rises,
My heart it surprises;
I can't keep it down, tho' I'd never so fain.

Fanny. *So here the play ends,*
The lovers are friends;
Ralph. *Hush!*
Fanny. ——*Tush!*
Giles. ——*Nah!*
Patty. ——*Psha!*
All. *What torments exceeding, what joys are above,*
The pains and the pleasures that wait upon love?

[Exeunt.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Marble Portico, ornamented with Statues, which opens from LORD AIMWORTH'S *House; two Chairs near the Front.*

Enter LORD AIMWORTH, *reading.*

Lord A. In how contemptible a light would the situation I am now in show me to most of the fine men of the present age! In love with a country girl! rivalled by a poor fellow, one of my meanest tenants, and uneasy at it!

Enter PATTY.

Patty. Now comes the trial: no, my sentence is already pronounced, and I will meet my fate with prudence and resolution.

Lord A. Who's there?

Patty. My lord!

Lord A. Patty Fairfield!

Patty. I humbly beg pardon, my lord, for pressing so abruptly into your presence, but I am come by my father's commands, to thank your lordship for all your favours.

Lord A. Favours, Patty! what favours? I have done you none:—But why this metamorphosis? I protest, if you had not spoke, I should not have known you: I never saw you wear such clothes as these in my mother's lifetime.

Patty. No, my lord; it was her ladyship's pleasure I should wear better, and, therefore, I obeyed; but it is now my duty to dress in a manner more suitable to my station and future prospects in life.

Lord A. I am afraid, Patty, you are too humble —come, sit down—nay, I will have it so. What is it I have been told to-day, Patty? It seems, you are going to be married?

Patty. Yes, my lord.

Lord A. Well, and don't you think you could have made a better choice than Farmer Giles? I should imagine your person, your accomplishments, might have entitled you to look higher.

Patty. Your lordship is pleased to overrate my little merit: the education I received in your family does not entitle me to forget my origin; and the farmer is my equal.

Lord A. In what respect? the degrees of rank and fortune, my dear Patty, are arbitrary distinctions, unworthy the regard of those who consider justly: the

true standard of equality is seated in the mind; those who think nobly, are noble.

Patty. The farmer, my lord, is a very honest man.

Lord A. The farmer is an ill-bred, illiterate booby; and what happiness can you propose to yourself in such a society?—Then, as to his person, I am sure —But, perhaps, Patty, you like him? and, if so, I am doing a wrong thing.

Patty. I hope, my lord, he has not incurred your displeasure——

Lord A. That's of no signification.—Could I find as many good qualities in him as you do, perhaps—— But 'tis enough; he's a fellow I don't like; and, as you have a regard for him, I would have you advise him to provide himself with another farm.

Patty. My lord, I am very unfortunate.

Lord A. She loves him, 'tis plain.—come, Patty, don't cry; I would not willingly do any thing to make you uneasy.—Have you seen Miss Sycamore yet?—I suppose you know she and I are going to be married?

Patty. So, I hear, my lord.——Heaven make you both happy!

Lord A. Thank you, Patty: I hope we shall be happy.

Patty. Upon my knees, upon my knees, I pray it! may every earthly bliss attend you! may your days prove an uninterrupted course of delightful tranquillity! and your mutual friendship, confidence, and love, end but with your lives!

Lord A. Rise, Patty, rise; say no more: I suppose you'll wait upon Miss Sycamore before you go away—at present, I have a little business——As I said, Patty, don't afflict yourself: I have been somewhat hasty with regard to the farmer; but since I see how deeply you are interested in his affairs, I may possibly alter my designs with regard to him——You

know—you know, Patty, your marriage with him is no concern of mine—I only speak.

AIR.

My passion, in vain I attempt to dissemble;
Th' endeavour to hide it but makes it appear:
Enraptured I gaze; when I touch her, I tremble,
And speak to, and hear, her with falt'ring and fear.

By how many cruel ideas tormented!
My blood's in a ferment; it freezes, it burns:
This moment I wish what, the next, is repented;
While love, rage, and jealousy, rack me by turns.

[Exit.

Enter GILES.

Giles. Miss Pat—Odd rabbit it, I thought his honour was here; and, I wish I may die, if my heart did not jump into my mouth—Come, come down in all haste, there's such rig below as you never knew in your born days.—There's as good as forty of the tenants, men and maidens, have got upon the lawn, before the castle, with pipers and garlands, just for all the world as tho'f it was Mayday; and the quality's looking at them out of the windows—'Tis as true as any thing—on account of my lord's coming home with his new lady.

Patty. Well, and what then?

Giles. Why, I was thinking, if so be as you would come down, as we might take a dance together: little Sal, farmer Harrow's daughter, of the Green, would fain have had me for a partner: but I said as how I'd go for one I liked better—one that I'd make a partner for life.

Patty. Did you say so?

Giles. Yes, and she was struck all of a heap—she had not a word to throw to a dog—for Sal and I kept company once, for a little bit.

Patty. Farmer, I am going to say something to you, and I desire you'll listen to it attentively. It seems, you think of our being married together?

Giles. Think? why, I think of nothing else; it's all over the place, mun, as how you are to be my spouse; and you would not believe what game folks make of me!

Patty. Shall I talk to you like a friend, Farmer? —You and I never were designed for one another; and I am morally certain we should not be happy.

Giles. Oh, as for that matter, I never has no words with nobody.

Patty. Shall I speak plainer to you then?—I don't like you.

Giles. No! that's very odd!

Patty. On the contrary, you are disagreeable to me.

Giles. Am I?

Patty. Yes, of all things—I deal with you sincerely.

Giles. Why, I thought, Miss Pat, the affair between you and I was all fixed and settled.

Patty. Well, let this undeceive you—Be assured, we shall never be man and wife. No offer shall persuade, no command force me.—You know my mind; make your advantage of it.

AIR.

Was I sure a life to lead
Wretched as the vilest slave,
Every hardship would I brave,
Rudest toil, severest need,
Ere yield my hand so coolly,
To the man, who never truly
Could my heart in keeping have. [Exit.

Giles. Here's a turn!—I don't know what to make of it:—she's gone mad, that's for sartin; wit and learning have cracked her brain—Poor soul! poor soul!—It is often the case of those who have too much of them—Lord, Lord, how sorry I be!—But hold, she says I baint to her mind—mayn't all this be the effect of moodish coyness, to do like the gentlewomen, because she was bred among them? And, I have heard say, they will be upon their vixen tricks, till they go into the very church with a man.

AIR.

When a maid, in way of marriage,
First is courted by a man,
Let un do the best he can,
She's so shame-faced in her carriage,
'Tis with pain the suit's began.

Tho'f, mayhap, she likes him mainly,
Still she shams it coy and cold,
Fearing to confess it plainly,
Lest the folks should think her bold.

But the parson comes in sight,
Gives the word to bill and coo;
'Tis a different story quite,
And she quickly buckles too. [Exit.

SCENE II.

A view of LORD AIMWORTH'S *House; a Seat under a Tree, and Part of the Garden Wall, with a Chinese Pavilion over it; several Country People appear dancing, others looking on; among whom are,* MERVIN, *disguised,* RALPH, FANNY, *and a number of* GIPSIES. *After the Dancers go off,* THEODOSIA *and* PATTY *enter through a Gate, supposed to have a connexion with the principal Building.*

Theod. Well then, my dear Patty, you will run away from us?—but why in such a hurry? I have a thousand things to say to you.

Patty. I shall do myself the honour to pay my duty to you some other time, madam; at present, I really find myself a little indisposed.

Theod. Nay, I would by no means lay you under any restraint.

Patty. Well, madam, you have the sages, poets, and philosophers, of all ages, to countenance your way of thinking.

Theod. And you, my little philosophical friend, don't you think me in the right too?

Patty. Yes, indeed, madam, perfectly.

AIR.

Trust me, would you taste true pleasure,
Without mixture, without measure,
Nowhere shall you find the treasure
Sure as in the sylvan scene:

Bless'd, who no false glare requiring,
Nature's rural sweets admiring,
Can, from grosser joys retiring,
Seek the simple and serene. [Exit.

Enter MERVIN *and* FANNY.

Mervin. Yonder she is seated, and, to my wish, most fortunately alone.—Accost her as I desired.

Theod. Heigh!

Fanny. Heaven bless you, my sweet lady——bless your honour's beautiful visage, and send you a good husband, and a great many of them!

Theod. A very comfortable wish, upon my word! who are you, child?

Fanny. A poor gipsy, an please you, that goes about begging from charitable gentlemen and ladies. —If you have e'er a coal, or bit of whiting in your pocket, I'll write you the first letter of your sweetheart's name—how many husbands you will have, and how many children, my lady: or, if you'll let me look at your line of life, I'll tell you whether it will be long or short, happy or miserable.

Theod. Oh! as for that I know it already—you cannot tell me any good fortune, and, therefore, I'll hear none.—Go about your business.

Mer. Stay, madam, stay—[*Pretending to lift a Paper from the Ground*]—you have dropped something—Fan, call the young gentlewoman back.

Fanny. Lady, you have lost——

Theod. Pho, pho, I have lost nothing!

Mer. Yes, that paper, lady; you dropped it as you got up from the chair.—Fan, give it to her honour.

Theod. A letter, with my address!

[*Takes the Paper, and reads.*

Dear Theodosia,

Though the sight of me was so disagreeable to you, that you charged me never to approach you more, I hope my hand-writing can have nothing to frighten or disgust you. I am not far off; and the person that delivers you this, can give you intelligence.

Come hither, child; do you know any thing of the gentleman that wrote this?

Fanny. My lady——

Theod. Make haste—run, this moment—bring me to him, bring him to me; say I wait with impatience—tell him I will go—fly any where——

Mer. My life! my charmer!

Theod. Oh, Heavens! Mr. Mervin!

Enter SIR HARRY *and* LADY SYCAMORE.

Lady S. Sir Harry, don't walk so fast; we are not running for a wager.

Sir Harry. Hough, hough, hough!

Lady S. Heyday, you have got a cough! I shall have you laid upon my hands presently.

Sir Harry. No, no, my lady; it's only the old affair.

Lady S. Come here, and let me tie this handkerchief about your neck; you have put yourself into a muck-sweat already. [*Ties a Handkerchief about his Neck.*] Have you taken your bardana this morning? Not you, I warrant now, though you have been complaining of twitches, two or three times; and, you know, the gouty season is coming on. Why will you be so neglectful of your health, Sir Harry? I protest, I am forced to watch you, like an infant!

Sir Harry. My lovey takes care of me, and I am obliged to her.

Lady S. Well, but you ought to mind me then, since you are satisfied I never speak but for your good.—I thought, Miss Sycamore, you were to have

followed your papa and me into the garden—How far did you go with that wench?

Theod. They are gipsies, madam, they say—Indeed, I don't know what they are.

Lady S. I wish, miss, you would learn to give a rational answer.

Sir Harry. Eh! what's that? gipsies! Have we gipsies here? Vagrants, that pretend to a knowledge of future events! diviners—fortune-tellers!

Fanny. Yes, your worship, we'll tell your fortune, or her ladyship's, for a crum of bread, or a little broken victuals—what you throw to your dogs, an please you.

Sir Harry. Broken victuals, hussy! How do you think we should have broken victuals?—If we were at home, indeed, perhaps you might get some such thing from the cook: but here we are only on a visit to a friend's house, and have nothing to do with the kitchen at all.

Lady S. And do you think, Sir Harry, it is necessary to give the creature an account?

Sir Harry. No, love, no; but what can you say to obstinate people?—Get you gone, bold face—I once knew a merchant's wife in the city, my lady, who had her fortune told by some of those gipsies.—They said she should die at such a time; and, I warrant, as sure as the day came the poor gentlewoman actually died with the conceit. Come, Dossy, your mamma and I are going to take a walk.—My lady, will you have hold of my arm?

Lady S. No, Sir Harry, I choose to go by myself.

Mer. Now, love, assist me!—[*Turning to the Gipsies.*]—Follow, and take all your cues from me—Nay, but, good lady and gentleman, you won't go, without remembering the poor gipsies?

Sir Harry. Hey, here is all the gang after us!

Gipsies. Pray, your noble honour!

Lady S. Come back into the garden; we shall be covered with vermin.

Gipsies. Out of the bowels of your commiseration!

Lady S. They press upon us more and more; yet that girl has no mind to leave them: I shall swoon away.

Sir Harry. Don't be frighten'd, my lady; let me advance.

AIR.

You vile pack of vagabonds, what do you mean?
I'll maul you, rascallions,
Ye tatterdemallions—
If one of them comes within reach of my cane.

Such cursed assurance!
'Tis past all endurance.
Nay, nay, pray come away.
They're liars and thieves,
And he that believes
Their foolish predictions,
Will find them but fictions,
A bubble that always deceives.
[Exeunt all but FANNY *and* GIPSY.

Fanny. Oh! mercy, dear——The gentleman is so bold, 'tis well if he does not bring us into trouble. Who knows but this may be a justice of peace? and see, he's following them into the garden!

Gipsy. Well, 'tis all your seeking, Fan.

Fanny. We shall have warrants to take us up, I'll be hanged else! We had better run away—the servants will come out with sticks, to lick us. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MERVIN *and* GIPSIES.

Mervin. Cursed ill fortune!—She's gone, and, perhaps, I shall not have another opportunity And you

you blundering blockhead! I won't give you a half-penny—Why did you not clap to the garden door, when I called to you, before the young lady got in? The key was on the outside, which would have given me some time for an explanation.

2 *Gipsy.* An' please your honour, I was dubus.

Mervin. Dubus! plague choke ye!—However, it is some satisfaction that I have been able to let her see me, and know where I am—[*Turning to the* GIPSIES, *who go off.*] Go, get you gone, all of you, about your business. [THEODOSIA *appears in the Pavilion.*

Theod. Disappeared—fled! Oh, how unlucky this is! Could he not have patience to wait a moment?

Mervin. I know not what to resolve on.

Theod. Hem!

Mervin. I'll go back to the garden door.

Theod. Mr. Mervin!

Mervin. What do I see?—'Tis she—'tis she herself!—Oh, Theodosia!—Shall I climb the wall, and come up to you?

Theod. No; speak softly: Sir Harry and my lady sit below, at the end of the walk—How much am I obliged to you for taking this trouble!

Mervin. Say but you love me.

Theod. What proof would you have me give you? I know but of one: If you please, I am willing to go off with you.

Mervin. Are you?——'Would to Heaven I had brought a carriage.

Theod. How did you come? Have you not horses?

Mervin. No; there's another misfortune! To avoid suspicion, I despatched my servant with them an hour ago: neither can we, nearer than the next town, get a post-chaise.

Theod. You say you have made a convert of the miller's son: return to your place of rendezvous—my father has been asked this moment by Lord Aim-

worth, who is in the garden, to take a walk with him down to the mill—they will go before dinner, and it shall be hard if I cannot contrive to be one of the company.

Mervin. And what then?

Theod. Why, in the mean time, you may devise some method to carry me from hence; and I'll take care you shall have an opportunity of communicating it to me.

Mervin. Well—but, dear Theodosia——

AIR.—THEODOSIA.

Hist, hist! I hear my mother call—
Pr'ythee begone!
We'll meet anon:
Catch this, and this—
Blow me a kiss,
In pledge of promised truth, that's all.
Farewell!—and yet, a moment stay;
Something beside I had to say:
Well, 'tis forgot;
No matter what——
Love grant us grace;
The mill's the place:
She calls again, I must away. [Exit.

Enter FANNY.

Fanny. 'Please your honour, you were so kind as to say, you would remember my fellow-travellers for their trouble; and they think I have gotten the money.

Mervin. Oh, here; give them this—[*Gives her Money.*] And for you, my dear little pilot, you have brought me so cleverly through my business, that I must——

Fanny. Oh, Lord, your honour—[MERVIN *kisses her.*] Pray don't—kiss me again.

Mervin. Again, and again——There's a thought come into my head.—Theodosia will certainly have no objection to putting on the dress of a sister of mine.—So, and so only, we might escape to-night.—This girl, for a little money, will provide us with necessaries.

Fanny. Dear gracious! I warrant you, now, I am as red as my petticoat: why would you royster and touzle one so?—If Ralph was to see you, he'd be as jealous as the vengeance!

Mervin. Hang Ralph! Never mind him.—There's a guinea for thee.

Fanny. What! a golden guinea?

Mervin. Yes; and if thou art a good girl, and do as I desire thee, thou shalt have twenty.

Fanny. Ay, but not all gold?

Mervin. As good as that is.

Fanny. Shall I, though, if I do as you bids me?

Mervin. You shall.

Fanny. Precious heart!—He's a sweet gentleman! Icod, I have a great mind——

Mervin. What art thou thinking about?

Fanny. Thinking, your honour? Ha! ha! ha!

Mervin. Indeed! so merry?

Fanny. I don't know what I am thinking about, not I—Ha! ha! ha!—Twenty guineas!

Mervin. I tell thee thou shalt have them.

Fanny. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Mervin. By Heaven, I am serious!

Fanny. Ha! ha! ha!—Why, then, I'll do whatever your honour pleases.

Mervin. Stay here a little, to see that all keeps quiet: you'll find me presently at the mill, where we'll talk farther.

AIR.

Yes, 'tis decreed, thou maid divine.
I must, I will, possess thee:
Oh, what delight, within my arms to press thee!
To kiss and call thee mine!
Let me this only bliss enjoy;
That ne'er can waste, that ne'er can cloy:
All other pleasures I resign.

Why should we dally;
Stand shilly-shally?
Let fortune smile or frown,
Love will attend us;
Love will befriend us;
And all our wishes crown. [Exit.

Enter RALPH.

Fanny. What a dear, kind soul he is!—Here comes Ralph—I can tell him, unless he makes me his lawful wife, as he has often said he would, the devil a word more shall he speak to me!

Ralph. So, Fan, where's the gentleman?

Fanny. How should I know where he is?—what do you ask me for?

Ralph. There's no harm in putting a civil question, be there? Why you look as cross and ill-natured—

Fanny. Well, mayhap I do, and mayhap I have wherewithal for it.

Ralph. Why, has the gentleman offered any thing uncivil?—'Ecod, I'd try a bout as soon as look at him.

Fanny. He offer!—no, he's a gentleman, every inch of him: but you are sensible, Ralph, you have been promising me, a great while, this, and that, and t'other; and, when all comes to all, I don't see but you are like the rest of them.

Ralph. Why, what is it I have promised?

Fanny. To marry me in the church, you have, a hundred times.

Ralph. Well, and mayhap I will, if you'll have patience.

Fanny. Patience me no patience; you may do it now if you please

Ralph. Well, but suppose I don't please; I tell you, Fan, you're a fool, and want to quarrel with your bread and butter; I have had anger enow from feyther already, upon your account, and you want me to come by more—As I said, if you have patience, mayhap things may fall out, and mayhap not.

Fanny. With all my heart then; and, now I know your mind, you may go hang yourself.

Ralph. Ay, ay!

Fanny. Yes, you may; who cares for you?

Ralph. Well, and who cares for you, an you go to that?

Fanny. A menial feller! Go, mind your mill and your drudgery; I don't think you worthy to wipe my shoes,—feller!

Ralph. Nay, but Fan, keep a civil tongue in your head—Odds flesh! I would fain know what fly bites all of a sudden now.

Fanny. Marry come up! the best gentlemen's sons in the country have made me proffers; and if one is a miss, be a miss to a gentleman, I say, that will give one fine clothes, and take one to see the show, and put money in one's pocket.

Ralph. Whu—whu—[FANNY *hits him a Slap.*]—What's that for?

Fanny. What do you whistle for then? Do you think I am a dog?

Ralph. Never trust me, Fan, if I have not a mind to give you, with this switch in my hand here, as good a lacing——

Fanny. Touch me, if you dare: touch me, and I'll swear my life against you.

Ralph. A murrain! with her damn'd little fist as hard as she could draw!

Fanny. Well, it's good enough for you: I'm not necessitated to take up with the impudence of such a low-lived monkey as you are.—A gentleman's my friend, and I can have twenty guineas in my hand, all as good as this is.

Ralph. Belike from this Londoner, eh?

Fanny. Yes, from him—so you may take your promise of marriage; I don't value it that—[*Spits.*] and if you speak to me, I'll slap your chops again.

AIR.

Lord, sir, you seem mighty uneasy;
But I the refusal can bear:
I warrant I shall not run crazy,
Nor die in a fit of despair.
If so you suppose, you're mistaken;
For, sir, for to let you to know,
I'm not such a maiden forsaken,
But I have two strings to my bow. [Exit.

Ralph. Indeed! Now, I'll be judged by any soul living in the world, if ever there was a viler piece of treachery than this here; there is no such a thing as a true friend upon the face of the globe, and so I have said a hundred times! A couple of base, deceitful—after all my love and kindness shown. Well, I'll be revenged; see an I ben't—Master Marvint, that's his name, an he do not sham it: he has come here and disguised unself; whereof 'tis contrary to law so to do: besides I do partly know why he did it; and I'll fish out the whole conjuration, and go up to the castle, and tell every syllable; a sha'n't carry a wench from me, were he twenty times the mon he is, and

twenty times to that again; and moreover than so, the first time I meet un, I'll knock un down, tho'f 'twas before my lord himself; and he may capias me for it afterwards an he wull.

AIR.

As they count me such a ninny,
So to let them rule the roast,
I'll bet any one a guinea
They have scored without their host.
But if I don't show them in lieu of it,
A trick that's fairly worth two of it,
Then let me pass for a fool and an ass.

To be sure yon sly cajoler
Thought the work as good as done,
When he found the little stroller
Was so easy to be won.
But if I don't show him in lieu of it,
A trick that's fairly worth two of it,
Then let me pass for a fool or an ass. [Exit.

SCENE III.

A Room in the Mill; two Chairs, with a Table, and a Tankard of Beer.

Enter FAIRFIELD *and* LORD AIMWORTH.

Fair. Oh the goodness, his lordship's honour—you are come into a littered place, my noble sir—the arm-chair—will it please your honour to repose you on this, till a better——

Lord A. Thank you, Miller, there's no occasion

for either,—I only want to speak a few words to you, and have company waiting for me without.

Fair. Without—won't their honours favour my poor hovel so far——

Lord A. No, Miller, let them stay where they are.—I find you are about marrying your daughter—I know the great regard my mother had for her; and am satisfied, that nothing but her sudden death could have prevented her leaving her a handsome provision.

Fair. Dear, my lord, your noble mother, you, and all your family, have heaped favours upon favours on my poor child.

Lord A. Whatever has been done for her she has fully merited——

Fair. Why, to be sure, my lord, she is a very good girl.

Lord A. Poor old man—but those are tears of satisfaction.—Here, Master Fairfield, to bring matters to a short conclusion, here is a bill of a thousand pounds.—Portion your daughter with what you think convenient of it.

Fair. A thousand pound, my lord! Pray excuse me; excuse me, worthy sir; too much has been done already, and we have no pretensions——

Lord A. I insist upon your taking it.—Put it up, and say no more.

Fair. Well, my lord, if it must be so: but indeed, indeed——

Lord A. In this I only fulfil what I am satisfied would please my mother. As to myself, I shall take upon me all the expenses of Patty's wedding, and have already given orders about it.

Fair. Alas, sir, you are too good, too generous; but I fear we shall not be able to profit of your kind intentions, unless you will condescend to speak a little to Patty.

Lord A. How speak!

Fair. Why, my lord, I thought we had pretty well

ordered all things concerning this marriage; but all on a sudden the girl has taken it into her head not to have the farmer, and declares she will never marry at all.—But I know, my lord, she'll pay great respect to any thing you say; and if you'll but lay your commands on her to marry him, I'm sure she'll do it.

Lord A. Who, I lay my commands on her?

Fair. Yes, pray, my lord, do; I'll send her in to you.

Lord A. What can be the meaning of this?—Refuse to marry the farmer!—How, why?—My heart is thrown in an agitation; while every step I take serves but to lead me into new perplexities.

Fair. And I humbly beg you will tell her, you insist upon the match going forward; tell her you insist upon it, my lord, and speak a little angrily to her. [*Exit.*

Enter PATTY.

Lord A. I came hither, Patty, in consequence of our conversation this morning, to render your change of state as agreeable and happy as I could: but your father tells me you have fallen out with the farmer: has any thing happened since I saw you last, to alter your good opinion of him?

Patty. No, my lord, I am in the same opinion with regard to the farmer, now, as I always was.

Lord A. I thought, Patty, you loved him; you told me——

Patty. My lord!

Lord A. Well, no matter—It seems I have been mistaken in that particular—Possibly your affections are engaged elsewhere: let me but know the man that can make you happy, and I swear——

Patty. Indeed, my lord, you take too much trouble upon my account.

Lord A. Perhaps, Patty, you love somebody so

much beneath you, you are ashamed to own it; but your esteem confers a value wheresoever it is placed.

Patty. Pray, pray, my lord, talk not to me in this style: consider me as one destined by birth and fortune to the meanest condition and offices, who has unhappily been apt to imbibe sentiments contrary to them! Let me conquer a heart where pride and vanity have usurped an improper rule; and learn to know myself, of whom I have been too long ignorant.

Lord A. Perhaps, Patty, you love some one so much above you, you are afraid to own it—If so, be his rank what it will, he is to be envied: for the love of a woman of virtue, beauty, and sentiment, does honour to a monarch.—What means that downcast look, those tears, those blushes? Dare you not confide in me?—Do you think, Patty, you have a friend in the world would sympathize with you more sincerely than I?

Patty. What shall I answer?—My lord, you have ever treated me with a kindness, a generosity, of which none but minds like yours are capable: you have been my instructor, my adviser, my protector: but, my lord, you have been too good: when our superiors forget the distance between us, we are sometimes led to forget it too: had you been less condescending, perhaps I had been happier.

Lord A. And have I, Patty, have I made you unhappy—I, who would sacrifice my own felicity, to secure yours?

Patty. I beg, my lord, you will suffer me to be gone: only believe me sensible of all your favours, though unworthy of the smallest.

Lord A. How unworthy?—You merit every thing; my respect, my esteem, my friendship, and my love! Yes, I repeat, I avow it: your beauty, your modesty, your understanding, have made a conquest of my heart.—But what a world do we live in! that, while I own

this; while I own a passion for you, founded on the justest, the noblest basis, I must at the same time confess the fear of that world, its taunts, its reproaches——

Patty. Ah! sir, think better of the creature you have raised, than to suppose I ever entertained a hope tending to your dishonour:—I am unfortunate, my lord, but not criminal.

AIR.

Cease, oh cease to overwhelm me,
With excess of bounty rare;
What am I? What have I? tell me,
To deserve your meanest care?
'Gainst our fate in vain 's resistance,
Let me then no grief disclose;
But, resign'd at humble distance,
Offer vows for your repose. [Exit.

Enter SIR HARRY SYCAMORE, THEODOSIA, *and* GILES.

Sir Harry. No justice of peace, no bailiffs, no headborough!

Lord A. What's the matter, Sir Harry?

Sir Harry. The matter, my lord—While I was examining the construction of the mill without, (for I have some small notion of mechanics,) Miss Sycamore had like to have been run away with by a gipsy man.

Theod. Dear papa, how can you talk so? Did not I tell you it was at my own desire the poor fellow went to show me the canal?

Sir Harry. Hold your tongue, miss. I don't know any business you had to let him come near you at all: we have stayed so long too; your mamma gave us but half an hour, and she'll be frightened out of her

wits—she'll think some accident has happened to me.

Lord A. I'll wait upon you when you please.

Sir Harry. Oh! but, my lord, here's a poor fellow; it seems his mistress has conceived some disgust against him; pray has her father spoke to you to interpose your authority in his behalf?

Giles. If his lordship's honour would be so kind, I would acknowledge the favour as far as in me lay.

Sir Harry. Let me speak—[*Takes* LORD AIMWORTH *aside*]—a word or two in your lordship's ear.

Theod. Well, I do like this gipsy scheme prodigiously, if we can but put it into execution as happily as we have contrived it.

Enter PATTY.

So, my dear Patty, you see I am come to return your visit very soon; but this is only a call *en passant*—will you be at home after dinner?

Patty. Certainly, madam, whenever you condescend to honour me so far: but it is what I cannot expect.

Theod. Oh fie, why not——

Giles. Your servant, Miss Patty.

Patty. Farmer, your servant.

Sir Harry. Here, you goodman delver, I have done your business; my lord has spoke, and your fortune's made: a thousand pounds at present, and better things to come; his lordship says he will be your friend.

Giles. I do hope then Miss Pat will make all up.

Sir Harry. Miss Pat make up! stand out of the way; I'll make it up.

The quarrels of lovers, odds me! they're a jest;
Come hither, ye blockhead, come hither:
So now let us leave them together.

Lord A. *Farewell, then!*
Patty. ——— *For ever!*
Giles. —— ——— *I vow and protest,*
'Twas kind of his honour,
To gain thus upon her;
We're so much beholden, it can't be exprest.
Theod. *I feel something here,*
'Twixt hoping and fear:
Haste, haste, friendly night,
To shelter our flight——
Lord A. } *A thousand distractions are rending my*
Patty. } *breast.*
Patty. *Oh, mercy.*
Giles. ——— *Oh dear!*
Sir Harry. *Why, miss, will you mind when you're spoke to, or not?*
Must I stand in waiting,
While you're here a prating?
Lord A. } *May ev'ry felicity fall to your lot!*
Theo. }
Giles. *She court'sies!—Look there,*
What a shape, what an air!
How happy! how wretched! how tired am I!
All. *Your lordship's obedient; your servant; good b'ye.* [Exeunt.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

The Portico to LORD AIMWORTH'S *House.*

Enter LORD AIMWORTH, SIR HARRY *and* LADY SYCAMORE.

Lady S. A wretch! a vile, inconsiderate wretch! coming of such a race as mine, and having an example like me before her!

Lord A. I beg, madam, you will not disquiet yourself: you are told here, that a gentleman lately arrived from London has been about the place to-day; that he has disguised himself like a gipsy, came hither, and had some conversation with your daughter: you are even told, that there is a design formed for their going off together; but possibly there may be some mistake in all this.

Sir Harry. Ay, but, my lord, the lad tells us the gentleman's name: we have seen the gipsies; and we know she has had a hankering——

Lady S. Sir Harry, my dear, why will you put in your word, when you hear others speaking?—I protest, my lord, I'm in such confusion, I know not what to say: I can hardly support myself——

Lord A. This gentleman, it seems, is at a little inn at the bottom of the hill.

Sir Harry. I wish it was possible to have a file of musqueteers, my lord; I could head them myself, being in the militia: and we could go and seize him directly.

Lord A. Softly, my dear sir; let us proceed with a little less violence in this matter, I beseech you. We should first see the young lady—Where is Miss Sycamore, madam?

Lady S. Really, my lord, I don't know; I saw her go into the garden about a quarter of an hour ago, from our chamber window.

Sir Harry. Into the garden! perhaps she has got an inkling of our being informed of this affair, and is gone to throw herself into the pond. Despair, my lord, makes girls do terrible things. 'Twas but the Wednesday before we left London, that I saw, taken out of Rosamond's Pond, in St. James's Park, as likely a young woman as ever you would desire to set your eyes on, in a new callimancoe petticoat, and a pair of silver buckles in her shoes.

Lord A. I hope there is no danger of any such fatal accident happening at present; but you will oblige me, Sir Harry?

Sir Harry. Surely, my lord——

Lord A. Will you commit the whole direction of this affair to my prudence?

Sir Harry. My dear, you hear what his lordship says?

Lady S. Indeed, my lord, I am so much ashamed, I don't know what to answer; the fault of my daughter——

Lord A. Don't mention it, madam; the fault has been mine, who have been innocently the occasion of a young lady's transgressing a point of duty and decorum, which, otherwise, she would never have violated. But if you and Sir Harry will walk in and repose yourselves, I hope to settle every thing to the general satisfaction.

Lady S. Come in, Sir Harry. [*Exit.*

Lord A. I am sure, my good friend, had I known that I was doing a violence to Miss Sycamore's inclinations, in the happiness I propose to myself——

Sir Harry. My lord, 'tis all a case——My grandfather, by the mother's side, was a very sensible man—he was elected knight of the shire in five successive parliaments; and died high sheriff of his county—a man of fine parts, fine talents, and one of the most curiousest dockers of horses in all England (but that he did only now and then for his amusement)—And he used to say, my lord, that the female sex were good for nothing but to bring forth children, and breed disturbance.

Lord A. The ladies were very little obliged to your ancestor, Sir Harry: but, for my part, I have a more favourable opinion——

Sir Harry. You are in the wrong, my lord: with submission, you are really in the wrong.

AIR.

To speak my mind of womenkind,
In one word 'tis this;
By nature they're design'd,
To say and do amiss.

Be they maids, be they wives,
Alike they plague our lives;
Wanton, headstrong, cunning, vain;
Born to cheat, and give men pain.

Their study, day and night,
Is mischief, their delight:
And if we should prevent,
At one door, their intent,
They quickly turn about,
And find another out. [Exit.

Enter FAIRFIELD.

Lord A. How now, Master Fairfield! what brings you here?

Fair. I am come, my lord, to thank you for your bounty to me and my daughter this morning, and most humbly to entreat your lordship to receive it at our hands again.

Lord A. Ay—why, what's the matter?

Fair. I don't know, my lord: it seems your generosity to my poor girl has been noised about the neighbourhood; and some evil-minded people have put it into the young man's head, that was to marry her, that you would never have made her a present so much above her deserts and expectations, if it had not been upon some naughty account: now, my lord, I am a poor man, 'tis true, and a mean one, but I and my father, and my father's father, have lived tenants upon your lordship's estate, where we have always been known for honest men; and it shall never be said that Fairfield, the miller, became rich, in his old days, by the wages of his child's shame.

Lord A. What, then, Master Fairfield, do you believe——

Fair. No, my lord, no; Heaven forbid! but when I consider the sum, it is too much for us: it is indeed, my lord, and enough to make bad folks talk.

Lord A. The farmer then refuses to marry Patty, notwithstanding their late reconciliation?

Fair. Yes, my lord, he does indeed; and has made a wicked noise, and used us in a very base manner.

Lord A. Well, master Fairfield, I will not press on you a donation, the rejection of which does you so much credit; you may take my word, however, that your fears upon this occasion are entirely groundless:

but this is not enough; as I have been the means of losing your daughter one husband, it is but just I should get her another; and, since the farmer is so scrupulous, there is a young man in the house here, whom I have some influence over, and I dare say he will be less squeamish.

Fair. To be sure, my lord, you have, in all honest ways, a right to dispose of me and mine, as you think proper.

Lord A. Go then immediately, and bring Patty hither; I shall not be easy till I have given you entire satisfaction. But, stay and take a letter, which I am stepping into my study to, write: I'll order a chaise to be got ready, that you may go backward and forward with greater expedition. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Near the Mill.

Enter FANNY, *following* RALPH.

Fanny. Ralph! Ralph!

Ralph. What do you want with me, eh?

Fanny. Lord, I never knowed such a man as you are since I comed into the world; a body can't speak to you, but you fall straightways into a passion: I followed you up from the house, only you run so there was no such a thing as overtaking you, and I have been waiting there at the back-door ever so long.

Ralph. Well, and now you may go and wait at the fore-door, if you like it: but I forewarn you and your

gang not to keep lurking about our mill any longer; for if you do, I'll send the constable after you, and have you every mother's skin clapped into the county gaol: you are such a pack of thieves, one can't hang so much as a rag to dry for you: it was but the other day that a couple of them came into our kitchen to beg a handful of dirty flour, to make them cakes, and before the wench could turn about, they had whipped off three brass candlesticks and a pot-lid.

Fanny. Well, sure it was not I!

Ralph. Then you know that old rascal, that you call father; the last time I catched him laying snares for the hares, I told him I'd inform the gamekeeper, and I'll expose all—

Fanny. Ah, dear Ralph, don't be angry with me.

Ralph. Yes, I will be angry with you—what do you come nigh me for?—You sha'n't touch me—There's the skirt of my coat, and if you do but lay a finger on it, my lord's bailiff is here in the court, and I'll call him and give you to him.

Fanny. If you'll forgive me, I'll go down on my knees.

Ralph. I tell you I won't.—No, no, follow your gentleman; or go live upon your old fare, crows and pole-cats, and sheep that die of the rot; pick the dead fowl off the dunghills, and squench your thirst at the next ditch, 'tis the fittest liquor to wash down such dainties—skulking about from barn to barn, and lying upon wet straw, on commons, and in green lanes—go, and be whipped from parish to parish, as you used to be.

Fanny. How can you talk so unkind?

Ralph. And see whether you will get what will keep you as I did, by telling of fortunes, and coming with pillows under your apron, among the young farmers' wives, to make believe you are breeding, with "The Lord Almighty bless you, sweet mistress, you cannot tell how soon it may be your own case."

You know I am acquainted with all your tricks—and how you turn up the whites of your eyes, pretending you were struck blind by thunder and lightning.

Fanny. Pray, don't be angry, Ralph.

Ralph. Yes, but I will though; spread your cobwebs to catch flies; I am an old wasp, and don't value them a button.

AIR.

When you meet a tender creature,
Neat in limb, and fair in feature,
Full of kindness and good nature,
Prove again as kind to she;
Happy mortal! to possess her,
In your bosom, warm, to press her,
Morning, noon, and night caress her,
And be fond as fond can be.

But if one you meet that's froward,
Saucy, jilting, and untoward,
Should you act the whining coward,
'Tis to mend her ne'er the whit.
Nothing's tough enough to bind her;
Then agog, when once you find her,
Let her go, and never mind her;
Heart alive, you're fairly quit. [Exit.

Fanny. I wish I had a draught of water. I don't know what's come over me; I have no more strength than a babe; a straw would fling me down.—He has a heart as hard as any parish officer; I don't doubt now but he would stand by and see me whipped himself; and we shall all be whipped, and all through my means——The devil run away with the gentleman, and his twenty guineas too, for leading me astray: if I had known Ralph would have taken it so, I would

have hanged myself before I would have said a word —but I thought he had no more gall than a pigeon.

AIR.

O, what a simpleton was I,
To make my bed at such a rate!
Now lay thee down, vain fool, and cry,
Thy true-love seeks another mate.

No tears, alack!
Will call him back,
No tender words his heart allure;
I could bite
My tongue through spite—
Some plague bewitch'd me, that's for sure.

[Exit.

SCENE III.

A Room in the Miller's House.

Enter GILES, *followed by* PATTY, *and* THEODOSIA.

Giles. Why, what the plague's the matter with you?—What do you scold at me for? I am sure I did not say an uncivil word, as I know of; I'll be judged by the young lady if I did.

Patty. 'Tis very well, Farmer; all I desire is, that you will leave the house: you see my father is not at home at present; when he is, if you have any thing to say, you know where to come.

Giles. Enough said, I don't want to stay in the house, not I; and I don't much care if I had never come into it.

Theod. For shame, Farmer! down on your knees, and beg Miss Fairfield's pardon, for the outrage you have been guilty of.

Giles. Beg pardon, Miss, for what?—Icod, that's well enough: why, I am my own master, ben't I?—If I have no mind to marry, there's no harm in that, I hope.—'Tis only changing hands. This morning she would not have me, and now I won't have she.

Patty. Have you!—Heavens and earth! do you think, then, 'tis the missing of you that gives me concern?—No, I would prefer a state of beggary a thousand times beyond any thing I could enjoy with you: and, be assured, if ever I was seemingly consenting to such a sacrifice, nothing should have compelled me to it, but the cruelty of my situation.

Giles. Oh, as for that, I believes you; but, you see, the gudgeon will not bite, as I told you a bit agone, you know: we farmers never love to reap what we don't sow.

Patty. You brutish fellow! how dare you talk—

Giles. So, now she is in her tantrums again, and all for no manner of yearthly thing.

Patty. But, be assured, my lord will punish you severely, for daring to make free with his name.

Giles. Who made free with it? did I ever mention my lord? 'Tis a cursed lie!

Theod. Bless me, Farmer!

Giles. Why, it is miss, and I'll make her prove her words—Then what does she mean by being punished? I am not afraid of nobody, nor beholden to nobody, that I know of; while I pays my rent, my money, I believe, is as good as another's: egad, if it goes there, I think there be those deserve to be punished more than I.

Patty. Was ever unfortunate creature pursued as I am, by distresses and vexations! [*Exit.*

Theod. My dear Patty—See, Farmer, you have thrown her into tears—Pray, be comforted.

Giles. Let her go out of 'em then. [*Exit.*

Enter MERVIN.

Theod. You are a pretty gentleman, are not you, to suffer a lady to be at rendezvous before you?

Mervin. Difficulties, my dear, and dangers—— None of the company had two suits of apparel; so I was obliged to purchase a rag of one, and a tatter from another, at the expense of ten times the sum they would fetch at the paper mill.

Theod. Well, where are they?

Mervin. Here, in this bundle—and though I say it, a very decent habiliment, if you have art enough to stick the parts together:—I've been watching till the coast was clear, to bring them to you.

Theod. Let me see—I'll slip into this closet and equip myself—All here is in such confusion, there will be no notice taken.

Mervin. Do so; I'll take care nobody shall interrupt you in the progress of your metamorphosis.—[*She goes in.*]—and, if you are not tedious, we may walk off without being interrupted by any one.

Theod. [*Within.*] Ha! ha! ha!—what a concourse of atoms are here! though, as I live, they are a great deal better than I expected.

Mervin. Well, pray make haste, and don't imagine yourself at your toilet now, where mode prescribes two hours, for what reason would scarce allow three minutes.

Theod. [*Within.*] Have patience; the outward garment is on already; and, I'll assure you, a very good stuff, only a little the worse for the mending.

Mervin. Imagine it embroidery, and consider it your wedding-suit.—Come, how far are you got?

Theod. [*Within.*] Stay, you don't consider, there's some contrivance necessary.—Here goes the apron, flounced and furbelowed, with a witness!—Alas, alas, it has no strings! what shall I do? Come, no matter, a couple of pins will serve—And now the cap—oh, mercy! here's a hole in the crown of it large enough to thrust my head through.

Mervin. That you'll hide with your straw hat; or, if you should not——What, not ready yet?

Theod. Only one minute more—Yes, now the work's accomplished. [*Enters from the Closet.*

AIR.

Who'll buy good luck, who'll buy, who'll buy
The gipsy's favours?——Here am I!

Through the village, through the town,
What charming sav'ry scraps we'll earn!
Clean straw shall be our beds of down,
And our withdrawing room, a barn.

Young and old, and grave and gay,
The miser and the prodigal;
Cit, courtier, bumpkin, come away;
I warrant, we'll content you all.

Mervin. Plague, here's somebody coming!

Enter FAIRFIELD *and* GILES.

Fair. As to the past, Farmer, 'tis past; I bear no malice for any thing thou hast said.

Giles. Why, Master Fairfield, you do know I had a great regard for Miss Patty; but when I came to consider all in all, I finds as how it is not advisable to change my condition yet awhile.

Fair. Friend Giles, thou art in the right; marriage is a serious point, and can't be considered too warily. —Ha! who have we here?—Shall I never keep my

house clear of these vermin?—Look to the goods there, and give me a horsewhip—by the Lord Harry, I'll make an example!—Come here, Lady Light-fingers, let me see what thou hast stolen!

Mervin. Hold, miller! hold!

Fair. Oh, gracious goodness! sure, I know this face—Miss—young Madam Sycamore——Mercy heart, here's a disguise!

Theod. Discovered!

Mervin. Miller! let me speak to you!

Theod. What ill fortune is this?

Giles. Ill fortune——Miss! I think there be nothing but crosses and misfortunes of one kind or other. [*Exit.*

Fair. Money to me, sir!—not for the world! you want no friends but what you have already—Lack-a day, lack-a-day, see how luckily I came in! I believe you are the gentleman to whom I am charged to give this, on the part of my Lord Aimworth—Bless you, dear sir, go up to his honour with my young lady—There is a chaise waiting at the door, to carry you—I and my daughter will take another way. [*Exit.*

Mervin. Pr'ythee read this letter, and tell me what you think of it.

Theod. Heavens! 'tis a letter from Lord Aimworth! we are betrayed!

Mervin. By what means I know not.

Theod. I am so frightened and flurried, that I have scarce strength enough to read it.

Mervin. Well, what do you think of it?—shall we go to the castle?

Theod. By all means—and in this very trim; to show what we are capable of doing, if my father and mother had not come to reason.—But, perhaps, the difficulties being removed, may lessen your *penchant;* you men are such unaccountable mortals!—Do you love me well enough to marry me, without making a frolic of it?

Mervin. Do I love you?
Theod. Ay, and to what degree
Mervin. Why do you ask me?

AIR.

Who, upon the oozy beach,
Can count the num'rous sands that lie?
Or, distinctly, reckon each
Transparent orb that studs the sky?

As their multitude betray,
And frustrate all attempts to tell;
So 'tis impossible to say
How much I love, I love so well.

Theod. But hark you, Mervin, will you take after my father, and be a very husband now?—Or don't you think I shall take after my mother, and be a commanding wife?
Mervin. Oh, I'll trust you.
Theod. But you may pay for your confidence.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter GILES.

Giles. Master Fairfield and Miss Patty, it seems, are gone to the castle too; where, by what I larns from Ralph in the mill, my lord has promised to get her a husband among the servants. Now, set in case the wind sits in that corner, I have been thinking with myself who the plague it can be: there are no unmarried men in the family that I do know of, excepting little Bob, the postillion; and Master Jonathan, the butler; and he's a matter of sixty or seventy years old. I'll be shot if it beant little Bob!—Icod, I'll take the way to the castle, as well as the rest; for I'd fain see how the nail do drive. It is well I had wit enough to discern things, and a friend to advise

with, or else she would have fallen to my lot.—But I have got a surfeit of going a courting, and burn me, if I won't live a bachelor! for, when all comes to all, I see nothing but ill blood and quarrels among folk when they are married.

AIR.

Then hey for a frolicsome life!
I'll ramble where pleasures are rife:
Strike up with the free-hearted lasses,
And never think more of a wife.
Plague on it! men are but asses,
To run after noise and strife.

Had we been together buckled,
'Twould have proved a fine affair:
Dogs would have bark'd at the cuckold,
And boys, pointing, cried—"Look there."

[Exit.

SCENE IV.

A grand Apartment in LORD AIMWORTH'S *House, opening to a View of the Garden.*

Enter LORD AIMWORTH, FAIRFIELD, PATTY, *and* RALPH.

Lord A. Thus, Master Fairfield, I hope I have fully satisfied you, with regard to the falsity of the imputation thrown upon your daughter and me——

Fair. My lord, I am very well content; pray do not give yourself the trouble of saying any more.

Ralph. No, my lord, you need not say any more.

Fair. Hold your tongue, sirrah!

Lord A. I am sorry, Patty, you have had this mortification.

Patty. I am sorry, my lord, you have been troubled about it; but really it was against my consent.

Fair. Well, come, children, we will not take up his honour's time any longer: let us be going towards home—Heaven prosper your lordship! the prayers of me and my family shall always attend you.

Lord A. Miller, come back—Patty, stay.

Fair. Has your lordship any thing farther to command us?

Lord A. Why, yes, Master Fairfield, I have a word or two still to say to you—In short, though you are satisfied in this affair, I am not; and you seem to forget the promise I made you, that, since I had been the means of losing your daughter one husband, I would find her another.

Fair. Your honour is to do as you please.

Lord A. What say you, Patty? will you accept of a husband of my choosing?

Patty. My lord, I have no determination; you are the best judge how I ought to act: whatever you command, I shall obey.

Lord A. Then, Patty, there is but one person I can offer you—and I wish, for your sake, he was more deserving—Take me—

Patty. Sir!

Lord A. From this moment our interests are one, as our hearts; and no earthly power shall ever divide us.

Fair. Oh the gracious! Patty—my lord—Did I hear right?—You, sir! you marry a child of mine!

Lord A. Yes, my honest old man; in me you behold the husband designed for your daughter: and I am happy that, by standing in the place of fortune, which has alone been wanting to her, I shall be able

to set her merit in a light where its lustre will be rendered conspicuous.

Fair. But, good, noble sir, pray consider; don't go to put upon a silly old man: my daughter is unworthy——Patty, child, why don't you speak?

Patty. What can I say, father? what answer to such unlooked for, such unmerited, such unbounded generosity?

Ralph. Down on your knees, and fall a crying.

Patty. Yes, sir, as my father says, consider—your noble friends, your relations—It must not, cannot be.

Lord A. It must, and shall—Friends! relations!—from henceforth I have none that will not acknowledge you: and I am sure, when they become acquainted with your perfections, those, whose suffrage I most esteem, will rather admire the justice of my choice, than wonder at its singularity.

AIR.

Lord A. *My life, my joy, my blessing!*
In thee each grace possessing,
All must my choice approve:
Patty. *To you my all is owing;*
Oh! take a heart o'erflowing
With gratitude and love.
Lord A. *Thus infolding,*
Thus beholding,
Both. *One to my soul so dear:*
Can there be pleasure greater?
Can there be bliss completer?
'Tis too much to bear!

Enter SIR HARRY, LADY SYCAMORE, THEODOSIA, *and* MERVIN.

Sir Harry. Well, we have followed your lordship's counsel, and made the best of a bad market—So, my lord, please to know our son-in-law, that is to be.

Lord A. You do me a great deal of honour—I wish you joy, sir, with all my heart.—And now, Sir Harry, give me leave to introduce to you a new relation of mine—This, sir, is shortly to be my wife.

Sir Harry. My lord!

Lady S. Your lordship's wife!

Lord A. Yes, madam.

Lady S. And why so, my lord?

Lord A. Why, 'faith, ma'am, because I can't live happy without her—And I think she has too many amiable, too many estimable qualities, to meet with a worse fate.

Sir Harry. Well, but you are a peer of the realm; you will have all the fleerers——

Lord A. I know very well the ridicule that may be thrown on a lord's marrying a miller's daughter; and I own, with blushes, it has for some time had too great weight with me: but we should marry to please ourselves, not other people; and, on mature consideration, I can see no reproach justly merited, by raising a deserving woman to a station she is capable of adorning, let her birth be what it will.

Sir Harry. Why, 'tis very true, my lord.—I once knew a gentleman that married his cook-maid: he was a relation of my own—You remember fat Margery, my lady? She was a very good sort of a woman, indeed she was, and made the best suet dumplings I ever tasted.

Lady S. Will you never learn, Sir Harry, to guard your expressions?——Well, but give me leave, my lord, to say a word to you—There are other ill consequences attending such an alliance.

Lord A. One of them, I suppose is, that I, a peer, should be obliged to call this good old miller, father-in-law. But where's the shame in that? He is as good as any lord, in being a man; and if we dare suppose a lord that is not an honest man, he is, in my opinion, the more respectable character. Come, Master Fairfield, give me your hand; from henceforth you have done with working; we will pull down your mill, and build you a house in the place of it; and the money I intended for the portion of your daughter, shall now be laid out in the purchase of a commission for your son.

Ralph. What, my lord, will you make me a captain?

Lord A. Ay, a colonel, if you deserve it.

Ralph. Then I'll keep Fan.

Enter GILES.

Giles. Ods bobs, where am I running?—I beg pardon for my audacity.

Ralph. Hip, farmer! come back, mon, come back—Sure my lord's going to marry sister himself; feyther's to have a fine house, and I'm to be a captain.

Lord A. Ho, Master Giles, pray walk in: here is a lady, who, I dare say, will be glad to see you, and give orders that you shall always be made welcome.

Ralph. Yes, Farmer, you'll always be welcome in the kitchen.

Lord A. What, have you nothing to say to your old acquaintance?——Come, pray let the farmer salute you——Nay, a kiss, I insist upon it.

Sir Harry. Ha! ha! ha!—hem!

Lady S. Sir Harry, I am ready to sink at the monstrousness of your behaviour!

Lord A. Fie, Master Giles, don't look so sheepish; you and I were rivals, but not less friends at present. You have acted in this affair like an honest English-

man, who scorned even the shadow of dishonour, and thou shalt sit rent-free for a twelvemonth.

Sir Harry. Come, sha'n't we all salute?—With your leave, my lord, I'll——

Lady S. Sir Harry!

AIR.

Lord A. *Yield who will to forms a martyr,*
While, unawed by idle shame,
Pride for happiness I barter,
Heedless of the million's blame.
Thus with love my arms I quarter;
Women graced in nature's frame,
Every privilege, by charter,
Have a right from man to claim.

Theod. *Eased of doubts and fears presaging,*
What new joys within me rise!
While mamma, her frowns assuaging,
Dares no longer tyrannize.
So long storms and tempests raging,
When the blust'ring fury dies,
Ah! how lovely, how engaging,
Prospects fair, and cloudless skies!

Sir Harry. *Dad, but this is wondrous pretty,*
Singing each a roundelay;
And I'll mingle in the ditty,
Though I scarce know what to say.
There's a daughter, brisk and witty;
Here's a wife, can wisely sway:
Trust me, masters, 'twere a pity,
Not to let them have their way.

Patty. *My example is a rare one;*
But the cause may be divined:
Women want not merit—dare one
Hope discerning men to find.

Oh! may each accomplish'd fair one,
Bright in person, sage in mind,
Viewing my good fortune, share one
Full as splendid, and as kind.

Giles. *Laugh'd at, slighted, circumvented,*
And exposed for folks to see't,
'Tis as tho'f a man repented
For his follies in a sheet.
But my wrongs go unresented,
Since the fates have thought them meet:
This good company contented,
All my wishes are complete. [Exeunt.

ADDITIONAL AIRS,

SOMETIMES INTRODUCED.

ACT THE SECOND.

GILES.

Gadzooks! there's such gig, and nice rig, on the lawn,
Little Sal for a partner would fain have me on,
But when yours I shall be,
How 'twill mortify she!
Then I'll bet twenty pound,
That the whole village round
Cannot show such a couple as Patty and me.

For you the sweetest flowers I chose,
See here the wreath I've wove;
Of this a chaplet I'll compose,
And crown you queen of love.

Though Jemmy so supple,
And Jenny so taper,
Cast off the first couple,
Because they can caper;

Polly jigs it with Roger,
Blithe Betty with Cudden:
And Cudden's a codger
Won't tire of a sudden:

Though Tim of the valley,
So nimble when tipsy,
Foots up to sly Sally,
That arch little gipsy;

Though spruce Davy Dumble
Is partner with Dolly,
And old Gaffer Grumble
Is link'd to young Polly;

Yet you and I'll dance for a crown or a guinea,
'Gainst Poll, Tim, Sal, Jem, Bet, Bill, Cudden, and Jenny.

FANNY.

The fields were gay,
And sweet the hay,
Our gang of gipsies seated,
Upon the grass,
Both lad and lass,
By you we all were treated.

Young chicken, geese,
With ducks and pease,
And beans and bacon dainty;
With punch and beer,
The best of cheer,
You gave us then in plenty.
'Twas all to cheat poor silly Fan,
And pilfer that same jewel;
You're sworn to me, you perjured man,
Though now so false and cruel.

Whene'er we'd meet,
With kisses sweet,
And speeches soft you won me;
The hawthorn bush
Should make you blush,
'Twas there you first undone me.

What signifies
Your shams and lies;
Your jokes no more shall jeer me;
A license bring,
And golden ring,
Or never more come near me.
For you have cheated silly Fan, &c.

FAIRFIELD.

Of aspect fair, and temper mild,
My Patty though you see;
When yet a babe, a sweeter child
Ne'er blest a parent's knee.
The infant flower, for tender care,
Cou'd every joy impart;
But now a bramble proves, to tear
Her aged father's heart.

ACT THE THIRD.

FAIRFIELD.

Ere round the huge oak, that o'ershadows my mill,
The fond ivy had dared to entwine;
Ere the church was a ruin, that nods on the hill,
Or a rook built her nest on the pine;

Cou'd I trace back the time, a much earlier date,
Since my forefathers toil'd in you field;
For the farm I now hold, on your lordship's estate,
Is the same that my grandfather till'd.

He dying, bequeath'd to his son a good name,
Which unsullied descended to me;
For my child I've preserved it, uncrimson'd with shame,
And it still from a spot shall be free.

THEODOSIA.

A thousand charms the lover sees
In her he loves, while bolts and keys
Keep two fond hearts asunder;
But soon each envious bar removed,
His passion cools, and why he loved
Is now his cause of wonder.

My heart is yours, you know my mind,
In vain to answer nay;
But will you be for ever kind,
For ever and a day?

Your faith, if proof to female wiles,
And beauty's sweet alluring smiles,
You'll never play the rover;
Nor I of cold neglect accuse,
Or in the lordly husband lose
The fond, the tender lover.
My heart is yours, &c.

VERSE *for* RALPH, *in the Vaudeville, after* PATTY.

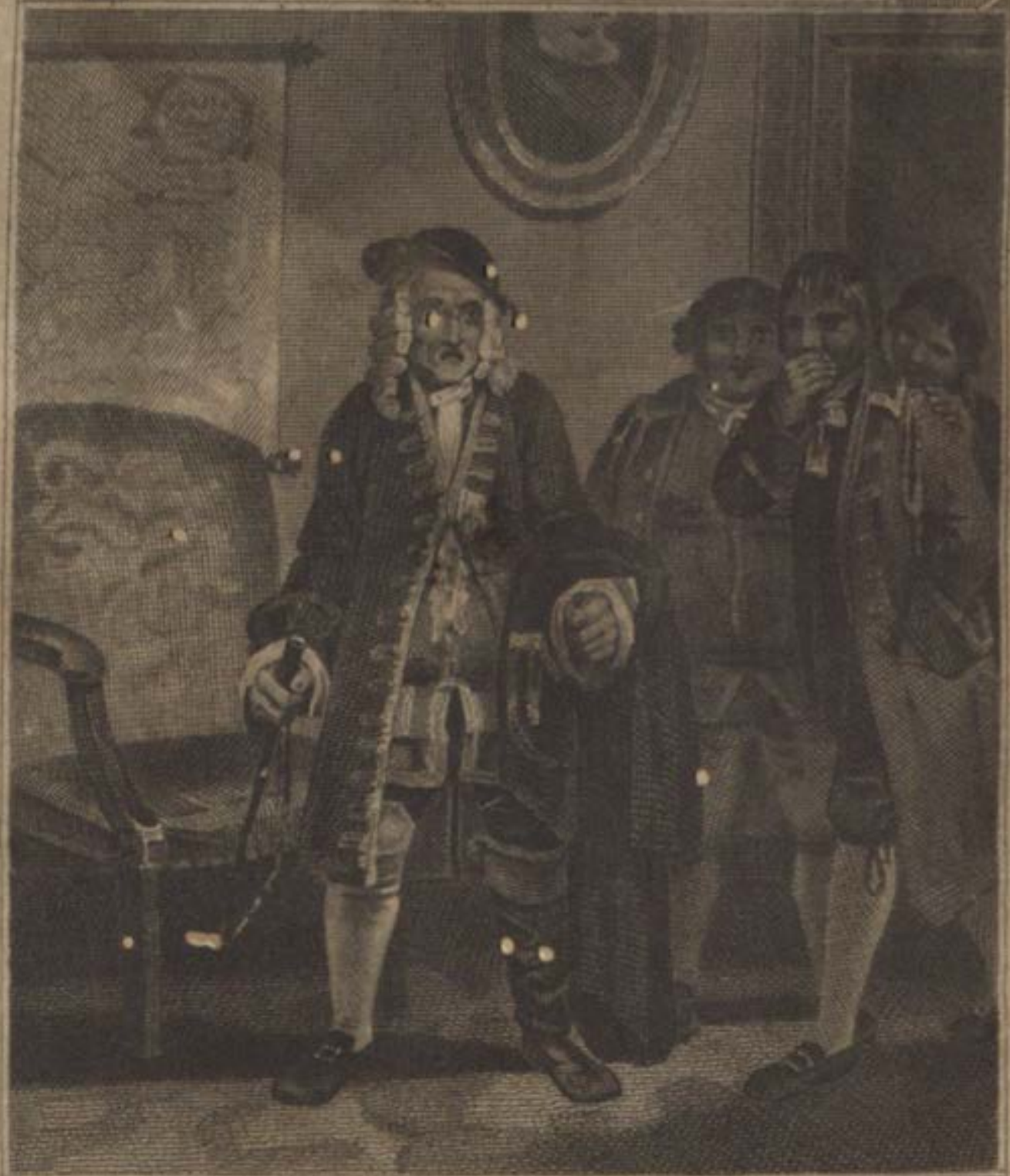
Captain Ralph, my lord will dub me,
Soon I'll mount a huge cockade;
Mounseer shall powder, queue, and club me,
'Gad, I'll be a roaring blade.

If Fan shall offer once to snub me,
When in scarlet all array'd,
Or my feyther dare to drub me,
Frown your worst—but who's afraid?

THE END.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

LIONEL AND CLARISSA.



COL. OLDBOY. SHE'S GONE, BY THE LORD!

ACT III. SCENE I.

Painted by Singleton. Published by Longman & Cº 1810. Engraved by C.Heath.

LIONEL AND CLARISSA;

A COMIC OPERA,

IN THREE ACTS;

By ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

EDINBURGH:
Printed by James Ballantyne & Co.

REMARKS.

THIS drama is from a pen, to which, next to Gay's, the English nation is indebted for the species of entertainment called opera.

"Love in a Village," and "The Maid of the Mill," had for several years delighted the town, when the author of these pieces produced the present musical work; more satisfied with his composition than he had been upon any other occasion, and, of course, more confident in his hopes of success.

"Lionel and Clarissa" was received with approbation; but in comparing it with those productions which had preceded it, and which the author had considered as inferior, it failed in reputation and attraction; and both he and the public were disappointed.

It is somewhat hard to be judged and punished upon the score of past services; and yet, in the usual method of rating, by the comparison of works from the same hand, is many a poor artist, more especially an author, tried and condemned.

It was the boast of the writer, in his preface to this drama, that the whole was of his own invention, having borrowed neither plot, incident, nor charac-

tor:—it, perhaps, had been better if he had; for his "Maid of the Mill," taken from "Pamela," and his "Love in a Village," taken from fifty things, will both long outlive all such operas as "Lionel and Clarissa."

Yet let not the reader suppose that he shall meet with no entertainment in perusing this play; for it contains many interesting scenes, some humour, and some very excellent lessons of moral purpose—especially to parents.

On account of its last-stated quality, when "Lionel and Clarissa" was (after having been acted some years at Covent Garden) brought upon the stage at Drury Lane, it had the additional title of "The School for Fathers" conferred by Garrick, who was then manager.

The School for Coxcombs had been an appellation equally just—for Jessamy is a striking likeness of the youthful tourists of that period, and was so excellently personated, in the Dublin theatre, by a comedian called Wilkes, that the opera, on his account alone, was attractive beyond any former example of theatric allurement in that metropolis, and ruined the opposing theatre, where some of the great tragedians of London were performing along with the most favoured actors of the Irish stage.

The song of Diana Oldboy to her brother, on his fantastic habiliments, is perfectly curious at the present day; being an exact description of the attire worn by men, called fops, at that, no very distant, time when it was written. Yet Miss Diana may be told, that even Jessamy's dress is not more out of

fashion now among men, than her total ignorance of the rudiments of astronomy is, at this period, among women of her birth and fortune.*

The contrast between Sir John Flowerdale and the Colonel is very happily executed; and whilst the wishes of an audience must ever be excited for a happy conclusion to the paternal anxieties of the first, every spectator is sure to be so extremely dissatisfied with the mind and manners of the last, that,—but for the preservation of the filial duty of the daughter, to spare her heart compunction for deceit and treachery —it might be wished that she had married the mean impostor her lover, without returning to obtain the consent of her profligate father.

Lionel and Harman are as much contrasted in the character of lovers, as the elder gentlemen are in the character of parents; and how much soever the young ladies of former times might allow themselves to sigh for men who descended to the vilest falsehoods, in order to obtain their hands, the better informed woman of the present era would, perhaps, as soon become the wife of the effeminate Jessamy, as of the unprincipled Harman; and have sense to look forward for happiness in wedlock only with a man of strict honour—such as Lionel.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LIONEL	*Mr Incledon.*
COLONEL OLDBOY	*Mr Munden.*
SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE	*Mr Murray.*
JESSAMY	*Mr Betterton.*
HARMAN	*Mr Clarke.*
JENKINS	*Mr Townsend.*
DIANA	*Mrs Mountain.*
LADY MARY OLDBOY	*Mrs Davenport.*
JENNY	*Mrs Martyr.*
CLARISSA	*Madame Mara.*

LIONEL AND CLARISSA.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Chamber in COLONEL OLDBOY'S *House;* COLONEL OLDBOY *is discovered at Breakfast, reading a Newspaper; at a little Distance from the Tea Table sits* JENKINS; *and, on the opposite Side,* DIANA, *who appears playing upon a Harpsichord. A* GIRL *attending.*

AIR.

Ah, how delightful the morning,
How sweet are the prospects it yields!
Summer luxuriant adorning
The gardens, the groves, and the fields.

Col. O. Well said, Dy, thank you, Dy. This, Master Jenkins, is the way I make my daughter entertain me every morning at breakfast. Come here, and kiss me, you slut, come here, and kiss me, you baggage.

Diana. Lord, papa, you call one such names——

Col. O. A fine girl, Master Jenkins, a devilish fine girl! she has got my eye to a twinkle. There's fire

for you—spirit!—I design to marry her to a duke. how much money do you think a duke would expect with such a wench?

Jenk. Why, Colonel, with submission, I think there is no occasion to go out of your own county here; we have never a duke in it, I believe, but we have many an honest gentleman, who, in my opinion, might deserve the young lady.

Col. O. So, you would have me marry Dy to a country 'squire, eh? How say you to this, Dy? would not you rather be married to a duke?

Diana. So my husband's a rake, papa, I don't care what he is.

Col. O A rake! you damned confounded little baggage! why, you would not wish to marry a rake, would you? So her husband is a rake, she does not care what he is! Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Diana. Well, but listen to me, papa—When you go out with your gun, do you take any pleasure in shooting the poor tame ducks and chickens in your yard? No, the partridge, the pheasant, the woodcock, are the game; there is some sport in bringing them down, because they are wild; and it is just the same with a husband or a lover. I would not waste powder and shot to wound one of your sober, pretty-behaved gentlemen; but to hit a libertine, extravagant, mad-cap fellow, to take him upon the wing—

Col. O. Do you hear her, Master Jenkins? Ha! ha! ha!

Jenk. Well, but good Colonel, what do you say to my worthy and honourable patron here, Sir John Flowerdale? He has an estate of eight thousand pounds a-year, as well-paid rents as any in the kingdom, and but one only daughter to enjoy it; and yet he is willing, you see, to give this daughter to your son.

Diana. Pray, Mr Jenkins, how does Miss Clarissa, and our university friend, Mr Lionel? That is the

only grave young man I ever liked, and the only handsome one I ever was acquainted with, that did not make love to me.

Col. O. Ay, Master Jenkins, who is this Lionel? They say, he is a damned witty, knowing fellow; and egad, I think him well enough for one brought up in a college.

Jenk. His father was a general officer, a particular friend of Sir John's; who, like many more brave men, that live and die in defending their country, left little else than honour behind him. Sir John sent this young man at his own expense, to Oxford.

Diana. The last time I was at your house, he was teaching Miss Clarissa mathematics and philosophy. Lord, what a strange brain I have! If I was to sit down to distract myself with such studies—

Col. O. Go, hussy, let some of your brother's rascals inform their master that he has been long enough at his toilet; here is a message from Sir John Flowerdale—You a brain for mathematics, indeed! We shall have women wanting to head our regiments tomorrow or next day.

Diana. Well, papa, and suppose we did? I believe, in a battle of the sexes, you men would hardly get the better of us.

AIR.

To rob them of strength, when wise nature thought fit,
By women to still do her duty,
Instead of a sword, she endued them with wit,
And gave them a shield in their beauty.

Sound, sound the trumpet, both sexes to arms,
Our tyrants at once, and protectors!
We quickly shall see whether courage or charms
Decide for the Helens or Hectors. [Exit.

Col. O. Well, Master Jenkins! don't you think now that a nobleman, a duke, an earl, or a marquis, might be content to share his title—I say, you understand me—with a sweetener of thirty or forty thousand pounds, to pay off mortgages? Besides, there's a prospect of my whole estate; for I dare swear her brother will never have any children.

Jenk. I should be concerned at that, Colonel, when there are two such fortunes to descend to his heirs, as yours and Sir John Flowerdale's.

Col. O. Why, look you, Master Jenkins, Sir John Flowerdale is an honest gentleman; we have been neighbours time out of mind; and if he and I have an odd dispute now and then, it is not for want of a cordial esteem at bottom. He is going to marry his daughter to my son; she is a beautiful girl, an elegant girl, a sensible girl, a worthy girl, and—a word in your ear—damn me if I a'n't very sorry for her.

Jenk. Sorry, Colonel!

Col. O. Ay—between ourselves, Master Jenkins, my son won't do.

Jenk. How do you mean?

Col. O. I tell you, Master Jenkins, he won't do—he is not the thing, a prig—At sixteen years old, or thereabouts, he was a bold, sprightly boy, as you should see in a thousand, could drink his pint of port, or his bottle of claret—now he mixes all his wine with water.

Jenk. Oh! if that be his only fault, Colonel, he will ne'er make the worse husband, I'll answer for it.

Col. O. You know my wife is a woman of quality—I was prevailed upon to send him to be brought up by her brother, Lord Jessamy, who had no children of his own, and promised to leave him an estate—he has got the estate, indeed, but the fellow has taken his lordship's name for it. Now, Master Jenkins, I

would be glad to know how the name of Jessamy is better than that of Oldboy.

Jenk. Well, but, Colonel, it is allowed on all hands that his lordship has given your son an excellent education.

Col. O. Pshaw! he sent him to the university, and to travel, forsooth; but what of that? I was abroad, and at the university myself, and never a rush the better for either. I quarrelled with his lordship, about six years before his death, and so had not an opportunity of seeing how the youth went on; if I had, Master Jenkins, I would no more have suffered him to be made such a monkey of—He has been in my house but three days, and it is all turned topsy-turvy by him and his rascally servants—then his chamber is like a perfumer's shop, with wash-balls, pastes, and pomatum—and, do you know, he had the impudence to tell me yesterday, at my own table, that I did not know how to behave myself!

Jenk. Pray, Colonel, how does my Lady Mary?

Col. O. What, my wife? In the old way, Master Jenkins; always complaining; ever something the matter with her head, or her back, or her legs—but we have had the devil to pay lately—she and I did not speak to one another for three weeks.

Jenk. How so, sir?

Col. O. A little affair of jealousy—you must know my gamekeeper's daughter has had a child, and the plaguy baggage takes it into her head to lay it to me—Upon my soul, it is a fine fat chubby infant, as ever I set my eyes on; I have sent it to nurse; and, between you and me, I believe I shall leave it a fortune.

Jenk. Ah, Colonel, you will never give over.

Col. O. You know my lady has a pretty vein of poetry; she writ me an heroic epistle upon it, where she calls me her dear false Damon; so I let her cry a

little, promised to do so no more, and now we are as good friends as ever.

Jenk. Well, Colonel, I must take my leave; I have delivered my message, and Sir John may expect the pleasure of your company to dinner?

Col. O. Ay, ay, we'll come—pox o' ceremony among friends. But won't you stay to see my son? I have sent to him, and suppose he will be here as soon as his valet-de-chambre will give him leave.—Well, but, zounds, Jenkins, you must not go till you drink something—let you and I have a bottle of hock—

Jenk. Not for the world, Colonel; I never touch any thing strong in the morning.

Col. O. Never touch any thing strong! Why, one bottle won't hurt you, man; this is old, and as mild as milk.

Jenk. Pray excuse me.

AIR.

To tell you the truth,
In the days of my youth,
As mirth and nature bid,
I liked a glass,
And I loved a lass,
And I did as younkers did.

But now I am old,
With grief be it told,
I must those freaks forbear;
At sixty-three,
'Twixt you and me,
A man grows worse for wear.

Enter MR JESSAMY *and* LADY MARY OLDBOY.

Lady M. O. Shut the door; why don't you shut the door there? Have you a mind I should catch my

death? This house is absolutely the cave of Æolus; one had as good live on the Eddystone, or in a windmill.

Jess. I thought they told your ladyship, that there was a messenger here from Sir John Flowerdale.

Col. O. Well, sir, and so there was; but he had not patience to wait upon your curling irons. Mr Jenkins was here, Sir John Flowerdale's steward, who has lived in the family these forty years.

Jess. And pray, sir, might not Sir John Flowerdale have come himself? If he had been acquainted with the rules of good breeding, he would have known that I ought to have been visited.

Lady M. O. Upon my word, Colonel, this is a solecism.

Col. O. 'Sblood, my lady, it's none! Sir John Flowerdale came but last night from his sister's seat in the west, and is a little out of order. But I suppose he thinks he ought to appear before him, with his daughter in one hand, and his rent-roll in the other, and cry, Sir, pray do me the favour to accept them.

Jess. That's an exceeding fine china jar your ladyship has got in the next room; I saw the fellow of it the other day at Williams's, and will send to my agent to purchase it: it is the true matchless old blue and white. Lady Betty Barebones has a couple that she gave an hundred guineas for, on board an Indiaman; but she reckons them at an hundred and twenty-five, on account of half a dozen plates, four nankeen beakers, and a couple of shaking mandarins, that the custom-house officers took from under her petticoats.

Col. O. Did you ever hear the like of this! He's chattering about old china, while I am talking to him of a fine girl! I tell you what, Mr Jessamy,

since that's the name you chuse to be called by, I have a good mind to knock you down!

Jess. Knock me down, Colonel! What do you mean? I must tell you, sir, this is a language to which I have not been accustomed; and, if you think proper to continue to repeat it, I shall be under a necessity of quitting your house!

Col. O. Quitting my house!

Jess. Yes, sir, incontinently.

Col. O. Why, sir, am not I your father, sir, and have not I a right to talk to you as I like? I will, sirrah! But, perhaps, I mayn't be your father, and I hope not.

Lady M. O. Heavens and earth, Mr Oldboy!

Col. O. What's the matter, madam? I mean, madam, that he might have been changed at nurse, madam; and I believe he was.

Jess. Huh! huh! huh!

Col. O. Do you laugh at me, you saucy jackanapes!

Lady M. O. Who's there? somebody bring me a chair. Really, Mr Oldboy, you throw my weakly frame into such repeated convulsions—but I see your aim; you want to lay me in my grave, and you will very soon have that satisfaction.

Col. O. I can't bear the sight of him.

Lady M. O. Open that window, give me air, or I shall faint.

Jess. Hold, hold, let me tie a handkerchief about my neck first. This cursed sharp north wind—Antoine, bring down my muff.

Col. O. Ay, do, and his great coat.

Lady M. O. Margaret, some hartshorn.

Jess. Colonel!

Col. O. Do you hear the puppy?

Jess. Will you give me leave to ask you one question?

Col. O. I don't know whether I will or not.

Jess. I should be glad to know, that's all, what single circumstance in my conduct, carriage, or figure, you can possibly find fault with—Perhaps I may be brought to reform—Pr'ythee, let me hear from your own mouth, then, seriously, what it is you do like, and what it is you do not like?

Col. O. Hum!

Jess. Be ingenuous, speak and spare not.

Col. O. You would know?

AIR.

Zounds, sir! then I'll tell you, without any jest,
The thing of all things, which I hate and detest;
A coxcomb, a fop,
A dainty milk-sop;
Who, essenced and dizen'd from bottom to top,
Looks just like a doll for a milliner's shop.
A thing full of prate,
And pride and conceit;
All fashion, no weight;
Who shrugs, and takes snuff,
And carries a muff;
A minikin,
Finikin,
French powder-puff:
And, now, sir, I fancy, I've told you enough.

[Exit.

Jess. What's the matter with the Colonel, madam; does your ladyship know?

Lady M. O. Heigho! don't be surprised, my dear; it was the same thing with my late dear brother, Lord Jessamy; they never could agree: that good-natured, friendly soul, knowing the delicacy of my constitution, has often said, Sister Mary, I pity you.

Jes. I think he ought to be proud of me: I be-

lieve there's many a duke, nay prince, who would esteem themselves happy in having such a son——

Lady M. O. Yes, my dear; but your sister was always your father's favourite: he intends to give her a prodigious fortune, and sets his heart upon seeing her a woman of quality.

Jess. He should wish to see her look a little like a gentlewoman first. When she was in London last winter, I am told she was taken notice of by a few men. But she wants air, manner——

Lady M. O. Well, my dear, I must go and dress myself, though I protest I am fitter for my bed than my coach. And condescend to the Colonel a little—Do, my dear, if it be only to oblige your mamma.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Study in SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE'S *House; two Chairs and a Table, with Globes and Mathematical Instruments.*

Enter CLARISSA.

AIR.

Immortal pow'rs protect me,
Assist, support, direct me:
Relieve a heart opprest:
Ah! why this palpitation?
Cease, busy perturbation,
And let me, let me rest.

Enter JENNY.

Jenny. My dear lady, what ails you?

Clar. Nothing, Jenny, nothing.

Jenny. Pardon me, madam, there is *something* ails you indeed. Lord! what signifies all the grandeur and riches in this world, if they can't procure one content. I am sure it vexes me to the heart, so it does, to see such a dear, sweet, worthy young lady as you are, pining yourself to death.

Clar. Jenny, you are a good girl, and I am very much obliged to you for feeling so much on my account; but in a little time, I hope, I shall be easier.

Jenny. Why, now, here to-day, madam, for sartain you ought to be merry to-day, when there's a fine gentleman coming to court you; but, if you like any one else better, I am sure, I wish you had him, with all my soul.

Clar. Suppose, Jenny, I was so unfortunate, as to like a man without my father's approbation; would you wish me married to him?

Jenny. I wish you married to any one, madam, that could make you happy.

Clar. Heigho!

Jenny. Madam! Madam! yonder's Sir John and Mr Lionel on the terrace; I believe they are coming up here. Poor dear Mr Lionel, he does not seem to be in over great spirits either. To be sure, madam, it's no business of mine; but, I believe, if the truth was known, there are those in the house, who would give more than ever I shall be worth, or any the likes of me, to prevent the marriage of a sartain person that shall be nameless.

Clar. What do you mean? I don't understand you.

Jenny. I hope you are not angry, madam?

Clar. Ah! Jenny——

Jenny. Lauk! Madam, do you think, when Mr Lionel's a clergyman, he'll be obliged to cut off his hair? I'm sure it will be a thousand pities, for it is the sweetest colour, and looks the nicest put up in a queue.

Clar. I'm going into my dressing-room—It seems then Mr Lionel is a great favourite of yours; but pray, Jenny, have a care how you talk in this manner to any one else.

Jenny. Me talk! Madam, I thought you knew me better; and, my dear lady, keep up your spirits. I'm sure I have dressed you to-day as nice as hands and pins can make you.

AIR.

I'm but a poor servant, 'tis true, ma'am;
But was I a lady like you, ma'am,
In grief would I sit? The dickens a bit;
No, faith, I would search the world thro', ma'am,
To find what my liking could hit.

Set in case a young man
In my fancy there ran;
It might anger my friends and relations:
But if I had regard,
It should go very hard,
Or I'd follow my own inclinations. [Exeunt.

Enter SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE *and* LIONEL.

Sir J. F. Indeed, Lionel, I will not hear of it. What! to run from us all of a sudden, this way: and at such a time too; the eve of my daughter's wedding, as I may call it; when your company must be doubly agreeable, as well as necessary, to us! I am sure you have no studies at present, that require your attendance at Oxford: I must, therefore, insist on your putting such thoughts out of your head.

Lionel. Upon my word, sir, I have been so long from the university, that it is time for me to think of returning. It is true, I have no absolute studies; but,

really, sir, I shall be obliged to you, if you will give me leave to go.

Sir J. F. Come, come, my dear Lionel, I have for some time observed a more than ordinary gravity growing upon you, and I am not to learn the reason of it: I know, to minds serious and well-inclined, like yours, the sacred functions you are about to embrace——

Lionel. Dear sir, your goodness to me, of every kind, is so great, so unmerited! Your condescension, your friendly attentions—in short, sir, I want words to express my sense of obligations—

Sir J. F. Fie, fie! no more of them. By my last letters, I find that my old friend, the rector, still continues in good health, considering his advanced years. You may imagine I am far from desiring the death of so worthy and pious a man; yet, I must own, at this time, I could wish you were in orders, as you might then perform the ceremony of my daughter's marriage, which would give me a secret satisfaction.

Lionel. No doubt, sir, any office in my power, that could be instrumental to the happiness of any in your family, I should perform with pleasure.

Sir J. F. Why, really, Lionel, from the character of her intended husband, I have no room to doubt, but this match will make Clarissa perfectly happy: to be sure, the alliance is the most eligible for both families.

Lionel. If the gentleman is sensible of his happiness in the alliance, sir.

Sir J. F. The fondness of a father is always supected of partiality; yet, I believe, I may venture to say, that few young women will be found more unexceptionable than my daughter: her person is agreeable, her temper sweet, her understanding good; and, with the obligations she has to your instruction—

Lionel. You do my endeavours too much honour, sir; I have been able to add nothing to Miss Flower-

dale's accomplishments, but a little knowledge in matters of small importance to a mind already so well improved.

Sir J. F. I don't think so; a little knowledge, even in those matters, is necessary for a woman, in whom I am far from considering ignorance as a desirable characteristic: when intelligence is not attended with impertinent affectation, it teaches them to judge with precision, and gives them a degree of solidity necessary for the companion of a sensible man.

Lionel. Yonder's Mr Jenkins: I fancy he's looking for you, sir.

Sir J. F. I see him; he's come back from Colonel Oldboy's; I have a few words to say to him; and will return to you again in a minute. [*Exit.*

Lionel. To be a burden to one's self, to wage continual war with one's own passions, forced to combat, unable to overcome! But see, she appears, whose presence turns all my sufferings into transport, and makes even misery itself delightful.

Enter CLARISSA.

Perhaps, madam, you are not at leisure now; otherwise, if you thought proper, we would resume the subject we were upon yesterday.

Clar. I am sure, sir, I give you a great deal of trouble.

Lionel. Madam, you give me no trouble; I should think every hour of my life happily employed in your service; and, as this is probably the last time I shall have the satisfaction of attending you upon the same occasion——

Clar. Upon my word, Mr Lionel, I think myself extremely obliged to you, and shall ever consider the enjoyment of your friendship——

Lionel. My friendship, madam, can be of little mo-

men* to you; but if the most perfect adoration, if the warmest wishes for your felicity, though I should never be witness of it; if these, madam, can have any merit to continue in your remembrance a man once honoured with a share of your esteem——.

Clar. Hold, sir—I think I hear somebody.

Lionel. If you please, madam, we'll turn over this celestial globe once more—Have you looked at the book I left you yesterday?

Clar. Really, sir, I have been so much disturbed in my thoughts for these two or three days past, that I have not been able to look at any thing.

Lionel. I am sorry to hear that, madam; I hope there was nothing particular to disturb you. The care Sir John takes to dispose of your hand in a manner suitable to your birth and fortune——

Clar. I don't know, sir;—I own I am disturbed; I own I am uneasy; there is something weighs upon my heart, which I would fain disclose.

Lionel. Upon your heart, madam! did you say your heart?

Clar. I—did, sir,——I——

Enter JENNY.

Jenny. Madam! Madam! Here's a coach and six driving up the avenue: It's Colonel Oldboy's family: and, I believe, the gentleman is in it that's coming to court you.—Lord, I must run and have a peep at him out of the window— [*Exit.*

Lionel. Madam, I'll take my leave.

Clar. Why so, sir?—Bless me, Mr Lionel, what's the matter?—You turn pale.

Lionel. Madam!

Clar. Pray speak to me, sir.—You tremble.—Tell me the cause of this sudden change.—How are you?—Where's your disorder?

Lionel. Oh fortune! fortune!

AIR.

You ask me in vain,
Of what ills I complain,
Where harbours the torment I find;
In my head, in my heart,
It invades ev'ry part,
And subdues both my body and mind.

Each effort I try,
Ev'ry med'cine apply,
The pangs of my soul to appease;
But, doom'd to endure,
What I mean for a cure,
Turns poison, and feeds the disease. [Exit.

Enter DIANA.

Diana. My dear Clarissa!—I am glad I have found you alone.—For Heaven's sake, don't let any one break in upon us;—and give me leave to sit down with you a little:—I am in such a tremor, such a panic——

Clar. Mercy on us! what has happened?

Diana. You may remember I told you, that, when I was last winter in London, I was followed by an odious fellow, one Harman; I can't say but the wretch pleased me, though he is but a younger brother, and not worth sixpence: And, in short, when I was leaving town, I promised to correspond with him.

Clar. Do you think that was prudent?

Diana. Madness! But this is not the worst; for what do you think?—the creature had the assurance to write me about three weeks ago, desiring permission to come down and spend the summer at my father's.

Clar. At your father's!

Diana. Ay, who never saw him, knows nothing of him and would as soon consent to my marrying a horse-jockey. He told me a long story of some tale he intended to invent, to make my father receive him as an indifferent person; and some gentleman in London, he said, would procure him a letter, that should give it a face; and he longed to see me so, he said, he could not live without it; and if he could be permitted but to spend a week with me——

Clar. Well, and what answer did you make?

Diana. Oh! abused him, and refused to listen to any such thing. But—I vow I tremble while I tell it you—just before we left our house, the impudent monster arrived there, attended by a couple of servants, and is now actually coming here with my father.

Clar. Upon my word, this is a dreadful thing.

Diana. Dreadful, my dear!—I happened to be at the window as he came into the court, and I declare I had like to have fainted away.

Clar. Well, Diana, with regard to your affair—I think you must find some method of immediately informing this gentleman that you consider the outrage he has committed against you, in the most heinous light, and insist upon his going away directly.

Diana. Why, I believe that will be the best way—but then he'll be begging my pardon, and asking to stay.

Clar. Why then you must tell him positively you won't consent to it; and if he persists in so extravagant a design, tell him you'll never see him again as long as you live.

Diana. Must I tell him so?

AIR.

Ah! pr'ythee spare me, dearest creature!
How can you prompt me to so much ill nature?

Kneeling before me,
Should I hear him implore me,
Could I accuse him,
Could I refuse him
The boon he should ask?
Set not a lover the cruel task.

No, believe me, my dear,
Was he now standing here,
In spite of my frights, and alarms,
I might rate him, might scold him—
But should still strive to hold him—
And sink at last into his arms. [Exit.

Clar. How easy to direct the conduct of others, how hard to regulate our own! I can give my friend advice, while I am conscious of the same indiscretions in myself. Yet is it criminal to know the most worthy, most amiable man in the world, and not to be insensible to his merit? But my father, the kindest, best of fathers, will he approve the choice I have made? Nay, has he not made another choice for me? And, after all, how can I be sure that the man I love loves me again? He never told me so; but his looks, his actions, his present anxiety, sufficiently declare what his delicacy, his generosity, will not suffer him to utter.—

AIR.

Ye gloomy thoughts, ye fears perverse,
Like sullen vapours all disperse,
And scatter in the wind;
Delusive phantoms, brood of night,
No more my sickly fancy fright,
No more my reason blind.
'Tis done; I feel my soul released:
The visions fly, the mists are chased,
Nor leave a cloud behind. [Exit.

SCENE III.

View of SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE'S *House, with Gates, and a Prospect of the Garden.*

Enter HARMAN *and* COLONEL OLDBOY.

Col. O. Well, and how does my old friend Dick Rantum do? I have not seen him these twelve years: he was an honest worthy fellow as ever breathed; I remember he kept a girl in London, and was cursedly plagued by his wife's relations.

Har. Sir Richard was always a man of spirit, Colonel.

Col. O. But as to this business of yours, which he tells me of in his letter, I don't see much in it—An affair with a citizen's daughter—pinked her brother in a duel—is the fellow likely to die?

Har. Why, sir, we hope not; but as the matter is dubious, and will probably make some noise, I thought it was better to be for a little time out of the way; when, hearing my case, Sir Richard Rantum mentioned you; he said, he was sure you would permit me to remain at your house for a few days, and offered me a recommendation.

Col. O. And there's likely to be a brat in the case, and the girl's friends are in business—I'll tell you what will be the consequence then—They will be for going to law with you for a maintenance—but no matter, I'll take the affair in hand for you—make me your solicitor; and, if you are obliged to pay for a single spoonful of pap, I'll be content to father all the children in the Foundling Hospital.

Har. You are very kind, sir!

Col. O. But hold—hark you!—you say there's money to be had—suppose you were to marry the wench?

Har. Do you think, sir, that would be so right, after what has happened? Besides, there's a stronger objection—to tell you the truth, I am honourably in love in another place.

Col. O. Oh! you are?

Har. Yes, sir; but there are obstacles—a father! —In short, sir, the mistress of my heart lives in this very county, which makes even my present situation a little irksome

Col. O. In this county! Zounds! Then I am sure I am acquainted with her, and the first letter of her name is——

Har. Excuse me, sir, I have some particular reasons——

Col. O. But look who comes yonder—Ha! ha! ha! My son, picking his steps like a dancing-master.— Pr'ythee, Harman, go into the house, and let my wife and daughter know we are come, while I go and have some sport with him: they will introduce you to Sir John Flowerdale.

Har. If I find your friendship can be of any use to me, depend upon it I shall put it to the test.

[*Exit into the House.*

Enter MR JESSAMY, *and three* SERVANTS.

Col. O. Why, zounds! one would think you had never put your feet to the ground before; you make as much work about walking a quarter of a mile, as if you had gone a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Jess. Colonel, you have used me extremely ill, to drag me through the dirty roads in this manner.— You told me the way was all over a bowling-green; only see what a condition I am in!

Col. O. Why, how did I know the roads were dirty? is that my fault? Besides, we mistook the

way. Zounds, man, your legs will be never the worse, when they are brushed a little.

Jess. Antoine! have you sent La Roque for the shoes and stockings? Give me the glass out of your pocket—not a dust of powder left in my hair, and the frissure as flat as the foretop of an attorney's clerk—get your comb and pomatum; you must borrow some powder; I suppose there's such a thing as a dressing-room in the house?

Col. O. Ay, and a cellar, too, I hope; for I want a glass of wine cursedly—but hold! hold! Frank, where are you going? Stay, and pay your devoirs here, if you please; I see there's somebody coming out to welcome us.

Enter LIONEL, DIANA, *and* CLARISSA, *from the House.*

Lionel. Colonel, your most obedient; Sir John is walking with my lady in the garden, and has commissioned me to receive you.

Col. O. Mr Lionel, I am heartily glad to see you: come here, Frank—this is my son, sir.

Lionel. Sir, I am exceeding proud to——

Jess. Can't you get the powder, then?

Col. O. Miss Clary, my little Miss Clary, give me a kiss, my dear—as handsome as an angel, by Heavens! Frank, why don't you come here? this is Miss Flowerdale!

Diana. Oh, Heavens, Clarissa! Just as I said, that impudent devil is come here with my father.

Jess. Hadn't we better go into the house?

AIR.

To be made in such a pickle!
Will you please to lead the way, sir?
Col. O. *No—but if you please, you may, sir,*
For precedence none will stickle.

Diana. *Brother, no politeness? Bless me!*
Will you not your hand bestow?
Lead the lady.
Clar. ——————*Dón't distress me;*
Dear Diana, let him go.
Jess. *Ma'am, permit me!*
Col. O. ——————*Smoke the beau.*
Clar. *Cruel, must I, can I bear?*
Oh, adverse stars!
Oh, fate severe!
Beset, tormented,
Each hope prevented:
Col. O. *None but the brave deserve the fair.*
Come, ma'am, let me lead you:
Now, sir, I precede you.
Lovers must ill usage bear.
Clar. *Oh, adverse stars! oh, fate severe!*
Col. O. *None but the brave deserve the fair.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Hall in SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE'S *House, with the View of a grand Staircase through an Arch. On either side of the Staircase below, two Doors, leading from different Apartments.*

Enter LIONEL *followed by* JENNY.

Jenny. Well, but Mr Lionel, consider, pray consider, now; how can you be so prodigious undiscreet

as you are, walking about the hall here, while the gentlefolks are within in the parlour? Don't you think they'll wonder at your getting up so soon after dinner, and before any of the rest of the company?

Lionel. For Heaven's sake, Jenny, don't speak to me; I am the most wretched and miserable of mankind.

Jenny. Poor dear soul! I pity you. Yes, yes, I believe you are miserable enough, indeed; and I assure you I have pitied you a great while, and spoke many a word in your favour, when you little thought you had such a friend in a corner.

Lionel. But, good Jenny, since, by some accident or other, you have been able to discover what I would willingly hide from all the world, I conjure you, as you regard my interest, as you value your lady's peace and honour, never let the most distant hint of it escape you; for it is a secret of that importance—

Jenny. And perhaps you think I can't keep a secret? Ah, Mr Lionel! it must be hear, see, and say nothing in this world, or one has no business to live in it; besides, who would not be in love with my lady? There's never a man this day alive but might be proud of it; for she is the handsomest, sweetest temper'dest! and, I am sure, one of the best mistresses ever poor girl had.

Lionel. Oh, Jenny! she's an angel.

Jenny. And so she is indeed.—Do you know, that she gave me her blue and silver sack to-day, and it is every crumb as good as new; and, go things as they will, don't you be fretting and vexing yourself; for I am mortally sartain she would liverer see a toad than this Jessamy. Though I must say, to my thinking, he's a very likely man; and a finer pair of eye-brows, and a more delicate nose, I never saw on a face.

Lionel. By Heavens, I shall run mad!

Jenny. And why so? It is not beauty that always takes the fancy: moreover, to let you know, if it

was, I don't think him any more to compare to you, than a thistle is to a carnation: and so's a sign; for, mark my words—my lady loves you as much as she hates him.

Lionel. What you tell me, Jenny, is a thing I neither merit nor expect: No, I am unhappy, and let me continue so; my most presumptuous thoughts shall never carry me to a wish that may affect her quiet, or give her cause to repent.

Jenny. That's very honourable of you, I must needs say! but, for all that, liking's liking, and one can't help it; and if it should be my lady's case, it is no fault of yours. I am sure, when she called me into her dressing-room, before she went down to dinner, there she stood with her eyes brimful of tears; and so I fell a-crying for company—and then she said she could not abide the chap in the parlour; and, at the same time, she bid me take an opportunity to speak to you, and desire you to meet her in the garden this evening after tea; for she has something to say to you.

Lionel. Jenny, I see you are my friend; for which I thank you, though I know it is impossible to do me any service; take this ring, and wear it for my sake.

Jenny. I am very much obliged to your honour; I am your friend, indeed;—but, I say, you won't forget to be in the garden now; and, in the mean time, keep as little in the house as you can—for walls have eyes and ears; and I can tell you the servants take notice of your uneasiness, though I am always desiring them to mind their business.

Lionel. Pray have a care, Jenny, have a care, my dear girl—a word may breed suspicion.

Jenny. Pshaw! have a care yourself: it is you that breeds suspicion; sighing and pining about; you look for all the world like a ghost; and, if you don't pluck up your spirits, you will be a ghost soon; letting

things get the better of you. Though, to be sure, when I thinks with myself, being crossed in love is a terrible thing.—There was a young man in the town where I was born, made away with himself upon the account of it.

Lionel. Things sha'n't get the better of me, Jenny.

Jenny. No more they don't ought. And once again I say, fortune is thrown in your dish, and you are not to fling it out; my lady's estate will be better than three bishopricks, if Sir John could give them to you. Think of that, Mr Lionel—think of that.

Lionel. Think of what?

AIR.

Oh talk not to me of the wealth she possesses,
My hopes and my views to herself I confine,
The splendour of riches but slightly impresses
A heart that is fraught with a passion like mine.

By love, only love, should our souls be cemented;
No int'rest, no motive, but that would I own:
With her, in a cottage, be blest and contented,
And wretched without her, though placed on a throne.

[Exit.

Enter COLONEL OLDBOY.

Col. O. Very well, my lady, I'll come again to you presently, I am only going into the garden for a mouthful of air.—Ha! ha! my little Abigail!—Here, Molly! Jenny! Betty! What's your name?—Why don't you answer me, hussy, when I call you?

Jenny. If you want any thing, sir, I'll call one of the footmen.

Col. O. The footmen! the footmen! Damn me, I never knew one of them, in my life, that wouldn't prefer a rascal to a gentleman.—Come here, you slut, put your hands about my neck, and kiss me.

Jenny. Who, I, sir?

Col. O. Ay, here's money for you; what the devil, are you afraid of? I'll take you into keeping; you shall go and live at one of my tenant's houses.

Jenny. I wonder you aren't ashamed, sir, to make an honest girl any such proposal; you, that have a worthy gentlewoman, nay, a lady, of your own.—To be sure, she's a little stricken in years; but why shouldn't she grow elderly as well as yourself?

Col. O. Burn a lady! I love a pretty girl—

Jenny. Well, then, you may go look for one, sir. —I have no pretensions to that title.

Col. O. Why, you pert baggage, you don't know me?

Jenny. What do you pinch my fingers for?—Yes, yes, I know you well enough; and your charekter's well known all over the country, running after poor young creatures, as you do, to ruinate them.

Col. O. What, then people say——

Jenny. Indeed, they talk very bad of you; and, whatever you may think, sir, though I'm in a menial station, I'm come of people that wou'dn't see me put upon; there are those that would take my part against the proudest he in the land, that should offer any thing uncivil.

Col. O. Well, come, let me know now, how does your young lady like my son?

Jenny. You want to pump me, do you? I suppose, you would know whether I can keep my tongue within my teeth.

Col. O. She doesn't like him then?

Jenny. I don't say so, sir—Isn't this a shame now? I suppose, to-morrow or next day, it will be reported that Jenny has been talking—Jenny said that and t'other—But here, sir, I ax you, did I tell you any such thing?

Col. O. Why, yes, you did.

Jenny. I—d bless me! how can you——

Col. O. Ad! I'll mouzle you!
Jenny. Ah! ah!
Col. O. What do you bawl for?
Jenny. Ah! ah! ah! [*Runs out.*

Enter LADY MARY OLDBOY, DIANA, *and* HARMAN.

Lady M. O. Mr Oldboy, won't you give me your hand, to lead me up stairs, my dear?—Sir, I am prodigiously obliged to you; I protest, I have not been so well—I don't know when. I have had no return of my bilious complaint after dinner to-day, and ate so voraciously!—Did you observe, miss? Doctor Arsenic will be quite astonished when he hears it; surely his new-invented medicine has done me a prodigious deal of service.

Col. O. Ah! you'll always be taking one slop or other, till you poison yourself.—Give me a pinch of your ladyship's snuff.

Lady M. O. This is a mighty pretty sort of a man, Colonel—who is he?

Col. O. A young fellow, my lady, recommended to me.

Lady M. O. I protest, he has the sweetest taste for poetry!—He has repeated to me two or three of his own things; and I have been telling him of the poem my late brother, Lord Jessamy, made on the mouse that was drowned.

Col. O. Ay, a fine subject for a poem; a mouse that was drowned in a——

Lady M. O. Hush, my dear Colonel, don't mention it; to be sure, the circumstance was vastly indelicate; but, for the number of lines, the poem was as charming a morsel——Pray, sir, was there any news when you left London?

Col. O. What is that crawling on your ladyship's petticoat?

Lady M. O. Where—where?

Col. O. Zounds! a spider, with legs as long as my arm!

Lady M. O. Oh, Heavens! Ah, don't let me look at it! I shall faint, I shall faint! a spider, a spider! a spider! [*Exit.*

Col. O. Hold—zounds, let her go! I knew the spider would set her a galloping, with her damned fuss about her brother, my Lord Jessamy!—Harman, come here, how do you like my daughter? Is the girl you are in love with as handsome as this?

Har. In my opinion, sir.

Col. O. What! as handsome as Dy?—I'll lay you twenty pounds she has not such a pair of eyes.—He tells me he's in love, Dy—raging mad for love, and, by his talk, I begin to believe him.

Diana. Now, for my part, papa, I doubt it very much; though, by what I heard the gentleman say just now within, I find, he imagines the lady has a violent partiality for him; and yet he may be mistaken there too.

Col. O. For shame, Dy, what the mischief do you mean? How can you talk so tartly to a poor young fellow under misfortunes! Give him your hand, and ask his pardon.—Don't mind her, Harman—For all this, she is as good-natured a little devil as ever was born.

Har. You may remember, sir, I told you before dinner, that I had for some time carried on a private correspondence with my lovely girl; and that her father, whose consent we despair of obtaining, is the great obstacle to our happiness.

Col. O. Why don't you carry her off, in spite of him, then? I ran away with my wife—ask my Lady Mary, she'll tell you the thing herself.—Her old conceited lord of a father thought I was not good enough; but I mounted a garden wall, notwithstanding their chevaux-de-frize of broken glass bottles, took her out

of a three pair of stairs window, and brought her down a ladder in my arms—By the way, she would have squeezed through a cat-hole to get at me.—And I would have taken her out of the Tower of London, damme, if it had been surrounded with the three regiments of guards.

Diana. But surely, papa, you would not persuade the gentleman to such a proceeding as this is;—consider the noise it will make in the country; and if you are known to be the adviser and abettor——

Col. O Why, what do I care? I say, if he takes my advice he'll run away with her, and I'll give him all the assistance I can.

Har. I am sure, sir, you are very kind; and, to tell you the truth, I have, more than once, had the very scheme in my head, if I thought it was feasible, and how to go about it.

Col. O. Feasible, and knew how to go about it! The thing's feasible enough, if the girl's willing to go off with you, and you have spirit sufficient to undertake it.

Har. O, as for that, sir, I can answer.

Diana. What, sir? that the lady will be willing to go off with you?

Har. No, ma'am, that I have spirit enough to take her, if she is willing to go;—and thus far I dare venture to promise, that, between this and to-morrow morning, I will find out whether she is or not.

Col. O. So he may—she lives but in this county;—and tell her, Harman, you have met with a friend, who is inclined to serve you. You shall have my post-chaise, at a minute's warning; and if a hundred pieces will be of any use to you, you may command them.

Har. And are you really serious, sir?

Col. O. Serious? damme if I an't. I have put twenty young fellows in the way of getting girls, that they never would have thought of—and bring her to

my house—whenever you come, you shall have a supper and a bed; but you must marry her first, because my lady will be squeamish.

Diana. Well, but, my dear papa, upon my word you have a great deal to answer for: suppose it was your own case to have a daughter in such circumstances, would you be obliged to any one——

Col. O. Hold your tongue, hussy, who bid you put in your oar? However, Harman, I don't want to set you upon any thing—'tis no affair of mine, to be sure—I only give you advice, and tell you how I would act, if I were in your place.

Har. I assure you, sir, I am quite charmed with the advice; and, since you are ready to stand my friend, I am ready to follow it.

Col. O. You are

Har. Positively.

Col. O. Say no more, then, here's my hand—You understand me—No occasion to talk any further of it at present—When we are alone—Dy, take Mr Harman into the drawing-room, and give him some tea.—I say, Harman, mum. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

CLARISSA'S *Dressing-Room.—On one Side, a Table, with a Glass, Boxes, and Two Chairs.*

Enter DIANA, *then* JESSAMY.

Diana. Come, brother, I undertake to be mistress of the ceremony, upon this occasion, and introduce you to your first audience. Miss Flowerdale is not here, I perceive; but no matter.

Jess. Upon my word, a pretty, elegant, dressing-room this! but confound our builders, or architects, as they call themselves; not one of them knows the situation of doors, windows, or chimnies.

Diana. My dear brother, you are not come here as a virtuoso, to admire the temple; but, as a votary, to address the deity to whom it belongs. Show, I beseech you, a little more devotion, and tell me, how do you like Miss Flowerdale?—Don't you think her very handsome?

Jess. Pale—but that I am determined she shall remedy; for, as soon as we are married, I will make her put on rouge—Let me see, has she got any in her boxes here?

Diana. Brother, I would fain give you some advice upon this occasion, which may be of service to you. You are now going to entertain a young lady—Let me prevail upon you to lay aside those airs, on account of which, some people are impertinent enough to call you a coxcomb; for I am afraid she may be apt to think you a coxcomb too, as I assure you, she is very capable of distinguishing.

Jess. So much the worse for me:—If she is capable of distinguishing, I shall meet with a terrible repulse—I don't believe she'll have me.

Diana. I don't believe she will, indeed.

Jess. Go on, sister—ha! ha! ha!

Diana. I protest, I am serious! Though, I perceive, you have more faith in the counsellor before you there, the looking-glass: But, give me leave to tell you, it is not a powdered head, a laced coat, a grimace, a shrug, a bow, or a few pert phrases, learnt by rote, that constitutes the power of pleasing all women.

Jess. You had better return to the gentleman, and give him his tea, my dear.

Diana. These qualifications we find in our parrots and monkies. I would undertake to teach Poll, in

three weeks, the fashionable jargon of half the fine men about town; and I am sure it must be allowed, that pug, in a scarlet coat, is a gentleman as elegant and alluring as most of them.

AIR.

Ladies, pray admire a figure,
Fait selon le dernier gout.
First, his hat, in size no bigger
Than a Chinese woman's shoe:

Six yards of ribbon bind
His hair en baton behind;
While his solé-top's so high,
That in crown he may vie
With the tufted cockatoo.

Then his waist, so long and taper,
'Tis an absolute thread-paper:
Maids, resist him, you that can;
Odd's life, if this is all th' affair,
I'll clap a hat on, club my hair,
And call myself a man. [Exit.

Enter CLARISSA.

Clar. Sir, I took the liberty to desire a few moments private conversation with you—I hope you will excuse it—I am really greatly embarrassed: but, in an affair of such immediate consequence to us both—

Jess. My dear creature, don't be embarrassed before me—I should be extremely sorry to strike you with any awe; but this is a species of *mauvaise honte*, which the company I shall introduce you to will soon cure you of.

Clar. Upon my word, sir, I don't understand you.

Jess. Perhaps, you may be under some uneasiness lest I should not be quite so warm in the prosecution of this affair as you could wish—it is true, with regard to quality, I might do better: and, with regard to fortune, full as well—But you please me—Upon

my soul, I have not met with any thing more agreeable to me a great while.

Clar. Pray, sir, keep your seat.

Jess. Mauvaise honte again. My dear, there is nothing in these little familiarities between you and me—When we are married, I shall do every thing to render your life happy.

Clar. Ah, sir! pardon me. The happiness of my life depends upon a circumstance——

Jess. Oh! I understand you—You have been told, I suppose, of the Italian opera girl—Rat people's tongues!—However, 'tis true, I had an affair with her, at Naples, and she is now here. But be satisfied:—I'll give her a thousand pounds, and send her about her business.

Clar. Me, sir! I protest nobody told me—Lord! I never heard any such thing, or enquired about it.

Jess. No! have they not been chattering to you of my affair at Pisa, with the Principessa del——

Clar. No, indeed, sir.

Jess. Well, I was afraid they might; because, in this rude country—But, why silent on a sudden?—— don't be afraid to speak.

Clar. No, sir, I will come to the subject, on which I took the liberty to trouble you—Indeed, I have great reliance on your generosity.

Jess. You'll find me generous as a prince, depend on't.

Clar. I am blessed, sir, with one of the best of fathers; I never yet disobeyed him, in which I have had little merit; for his commands hitherto have only been to secure my own felicity.

Jess. Apres ma chere—

Clar. But now, sir, I am under the shocking necessity of disobeying him, or being wretched for ever.

Jess. Hem!

Clar. Our union is impossible.—Perhaps this frankness may offend you; but the anxiety under which I now labour, will, I hope, plead my excuse. The com-

mands of such a father as I am blessed with, I own, ought to be held sacred; yet such is his liberality of sentiment, that, I am well assured, he will not sacrifice my happiness to interest; neither can I act so basely, as to bestow my hand without my heart. [*Exit.*

Jess. Who's there?

Enter JENKINS.

Jenk. Do you call, sir?

Jess. Hark you, old gentleman! who are you?

Jenk. Sir, my name is Jenkins.

Jess. Oh, you are Sir John Flowerdale's steward—a servant he puts confidence in.

Jenk. Sir, I have served Sir John Flowerdale many years.

Jess. Then, Mr Jenkins, I shall condescend to speak to you. Does your master know who I am?—Does he know, sir, that I am likely to be a peer of Great Britain?—That I have ten thousand pounds a year?—That I have passed through all Europe with distinguished eclat? That I refused the daughter of Mynheer Van Slokenfolk, the great Dutch burgomaster? and that, if I had not had the misfortune of being bred a protestant, I might have married the niece of his present holiness, the pope, with a fortune of two hundred thousand piastres?

Jenk. I am sure, sir, my master has all the respect imaginable——

Jess. Then, sir, how comes he, after my showing an inclination to be allied to his family; how comes he, I say, to bring me to his house to be affronted? I have let his daughter go, but, I think, I was in the wrong; for a woman that insults me is no more safe than a man. I have brought a lady to reason before now, for giving me saucy language, and left her male friends to revenge it.

Jenk. Pray, good sir, what's the matter?

Jess. Why, sir, this is the matter, sir—your master's

daughter, sir, has behaved to me with damned insolence and impertinence: and you may tell Sir John Flowerdale, first with regard to her, that I think she is a silly, ignorant, awkward, ill-bred, country puss.

Jenk. Oh, sir! for Heaven's sake——

Jess. And that, with regard to himself, he is, in my opinion, an old, ridiculous, doting, country 'squire, without the knowledge of either men or things; and that he is below my notice, if it were not to despise him.

Jenk. Good Lord! Good Lord!

Jess. And advise him and his daughter to keep out of my way; for, by gad, I will affront them, in the first place I meet them.—And if your master is for carrying things further, tell him, I fence better than any man in Europe, Mr Jenkins.

AIR.

In Italy, Germany, France, have I been;
Where princes I've lived with, where monarchs I've seen.
The great have caress'd me,
The fair have address'd me,
Nay, smiles I have had from a queen.

And, now, shall a pert
Insignificant flirt,
With insolence use me;
Presume to refuse me?
She fancies my pride will be hurt.

But, tout au contraire,
I'm pleased I declare,
Quite happy to think I escape from the snare;
Serviteur, mam'selle; my claim I withdraw.
Hey, where are my people? Fal, lal, lal, lal la. [Exit.

Jenk. I must go and inform Sir John of what has happened; but I will not tell him of the outrageous behaviour of this young spark: for he is a man of spirit, and would resent it. Egad, my own fingers itched

to be at him, once or twice: and, as stout as he is, I fancy these old fists would give him a bellyful. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE'S *Garden, with a View of a Canal, by Moonlight: the Side Scenes represent Box Hedges, intermixed with Statues and Flowering Shrubs.*

Enter LIONEL, *leading* CLARISSA.

Lionel. Hist—methought I heard a noise! should we be surprised together, at a juncture so critical, what might be the consequence! I know not how it is, but at this, the happiest moment of my life, I feel a damp, a tremour at my heart——

Clar. Then, what should I do? If you tremble, I ought to be terrified indeed, who have discovered sentiments, which, perhaps, I should have hid, with a frankness, that, by a man less generous, less noble-minded than yourself, might be construed to my disadvantage.

Lionel. Oh, wound me not with so cruel an expression!—You love me, and have condescended to confess it—You have seen my torments, and been kind enough to pity them—The world, indeed, may blame you——

Clar. Be calm, and listen to me—what I have done has not been lightly imagined, nor rashly undertaken—it is the work of reflection—of conviction: my love is not a sacrifice to my own fancy, but a tribute to your worth—did I think there was a more deserving man in the world—

Lionel. If, to dote on you more than life, be to deserve you, so far I have merit—if, to have no wish, no hope, no thought, but you, can entitle me to the envied distinction of a moment's regard, so far I dare pretend.

Clar. That I have this day refused a man, with whom I could not be happy, I make no merit: born for quiet and simplicity, the crowds of the world, the noise attending pomp and distinction, have no charms for me:—I wish to pass my life in rational tranquillity, with a friend, whose virtues I can respect— whose talents I can admire—who will make my esteem the basis of my affection.

Lionel. O charming creature! yes, let me indulge the flattering idea—formed with the same sentiments, the same feelings, the same tender passion for each other, Nature designed us to compose that sacred union, which nothing but death can annul.

Clar. One only thing remember—Secure in each other's affections, here we must rest: I would not give my father a moment's pain, to purchase the empire of the world.

AIR.

Go, and on my truth relying,
Comfort to your cares applying,
Bid each doubt and sorrow flying,
Leave to peace and love your breast.

Go, and may the pow'rs that hear us,
Still, as kind protectors near us,
Through our troubles safely steer us
To a port of joy and rest.

[Exit.

Enter SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE.

Sir J. F. Who's there? Lionel?
Lionel. Heavens! 'tis Sir John Flowerdale!
Sir J. F. Who's there?
Lionel. 'Tis I, sir—I am here—Lionel.
Sir J. F. My dear lad, I have been searching for

you this half hour, and was at last told, you had come into the garden. I have a piece of news, which, I dare swear, will shock and surprise you; my daughter has refused Colonel Oldboy's son, who is this minute departed the house, in violent resentment of her ill treatment. Oh, Lionel! Clarissa has deceived me—in this affair she has suffered me to deceive myself.

Lionel. Have juster thoughts of her, sir—She has not deceived you, she is incapable—have but a little patience, and things may yet be brought about.

Sir J. F. No, Lionel, no,—the matter is past, and there's an end to it; yet I would conjecture, to what such an unexpected turn in her conduct can be owing—I would fain be satisfied of the motive that could urge her to so extraordinary a proceeding, without the least intimation, the least warning to me, or any of her friends.

Lionel. Perhaps, sir, the gentleman may have been too impetuous, and offended Miss Flowerdale's delicacy—certainly nothing else could occasion——

Sir J. F. Heaven only knows—surely her affections are not engaged elsewhere.

Lionel. Engaged, sir!—No, sir.

Sir J. F. I think not, Lionel.

Lionel. You may be positive, sir—I'm sure——

Sir J. F. However, my particular disappointment ought not to be detrimental to you, nor shall it: I well know how irksome it is to a generous mind to live in a state of dependence, and have long had it in my thoughts to make you easy for life.

Lionel. Sir John, the situation of my mind at present is a little disturbed—spare me, I beseech you, spare me! why will you persist in a goodness, that makes me ashamed of myself?

Sir J. F. There is an estate in this county which I purchased some years ago; by me it will never be missed, and whoever marries my daughter will have little reason to complain of my disposing of such a

trifle for my own gratification. On the present marriage, I intended to perfect a deed of gift in your favour, which has been for some time preparing; my lawyer has this day completed it, and it is yours, my dear Lionel, with every good wish that the warmest friend can bestow.

Lion. Sir, if you presented a pistol, with a design to shoot me, I would submit to it; but you must excuse me—I cannot lay myself under more obligations.

Sir J. F. Your delicacy carries you too far; in this I confer a favour on myself,—however, we'll talk no more on the subject at present—let us walk towards the house, our friends will depart else, without my bidding them adieu. [*Exeunt.*

Enter DIANA *and* CLARISSA.

Diana. So, then, my dear Clarissa, you really give credit to the ravings of that French wretch, with regard to a plurality of worlds?

Clar. I don't make it an absolute article of belief, but I think it an ingenious conjecture, with great probability on its side.

Diana. And we are a moon to the moon! Nay, child, I know something of astronomy, but—that that little shining thing there, which seems not much larger than a silver plate, should, perhaps, contain great cities, like London—and who can tell but they may have kings there, and parliaments, and plays, and operas, and people of fashion! Lord, the people of fashion in the moon must be strange creatures!

Clar. Methinks Venus shines very bright in yonder corner.

Diana. Venus! O pray let me look at Venus! I suppose, if there are any inhabitants there, they must be all lovers. [*They retire up the Stage.*

Enter LIONEL.

Lionel. Was there ever such a wretch! I can't stay a moment in a place—where is my repose?—fled with my virtue. Was I then born for falsehood and dissimulation?—I was, I was, and I live to be conscious of it; to impose upon my friend—to betray my benefactor, and lie to hide my ingratitude—a monster in a moment—No, I may be the most unfortunate of men, but I will not be the most odious; while my heart is yet capable of dictating what is honest, I will obey its voice.

Enter COLONEL OLDBOY *and* HARMAN.

Col. O. Dy, where are you? What, the mischief, is this a time to be walking in the garden? The coach has been ready this half hour, and your mamma is waiting for you.

Diana. I am learning astronomy, sir; do you know, papa, that the moon is inhabited?

Col. O. Hussy, you are half a lunatic yourself; come here, things have gone just as I imagined they would, —the girl has refused your brother—I knew he must disgust her.

Diana. Women will want taste now and then, sir.

Col. O. But I must talk to the young lady a little.

Har. Well, I have had a long conference with your father about the elopement, and he continues firm in his opinion, that I ought to attempt it; in short, all the necessary operations are settled between us, and I am to leave his house to-morrow morning, if I can but persuade the young lady——

Diana. Ay, but I hope the young lady will have more sense.

Col. O. Miss Clarissa, my dear, though I am father to the puppy who has displeased you, give me a kiss—you served him right, and I thank you for it.

AIR.

Col. O. *O what a night is here for love!*
Cynthia brightly shining above;
Among the trees,
To the sighing breeze,
Fountains tinkling,
Stars a twinkling.
Diana. *O what a night is here for love!*
So may the morn propitious prove!
Har. *And so it will, if right I guess;*
For sometimes light,
As well as night,
A lover's hopes may bless.

Duet. *Farewell, my friend,*
May gentle rest
Calm each tumult in your breast,
Every pain and fear remove!
Lionel. *What have I done?*
Where shall I run?
With grief and shame at once oppress'd;
How my own upbraiding shun,
Or meet my friend distress'd?

Trio. *Hark to Philomel, how sweet,*
From yonder elm!
Col. O. *Tweet, tweet, tweet, tweet.*
Quintet. *O what a night is here for love!*
But vainly nature strives to move.
Nor nightingale among the trees,
Nor twinkling stars, nor sighing breeze,
Nor murm'ring streams,
Nor Phœbe's beams,
Can charm, unless the heart's at ease.

[Exeunt.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Room in COLONEL OLDBOY'S *House.*

Enter HARMAN, *with his Hat, Boots, and Whip, followed by Diana.*

Diana. Pr'ythee, hear me.

Har. My dear, what would you say?

Diana. I am afraid of the step we are going to take—indeed, I am: 'tis true, my father is the contriver of it; but, really, on consideration, I think I should appear less culpable if he was not so; I am, at once, criminal myself, and rendering him ridiculous.

Har. Do you love me?

Diana. Suppose I do, you give me a very ill proof of your love for me, when you would take advantage of my tenderness, to blind my reason.

Har. Come, get yourself ready—where is your band-box, hat, and cloak?—Slip into the garden—be there at the iron gate, which you showed me just now, and, as the post-chaise comes round, I will step and take you in.

Diana. Dear Harman, let me beg of you to desist.

Har. Dear Diana, let me beg of you to go on.

Diana. I shall never have resolution to carry me through it.

Har. We shall have four horses, my dear, and they will assist us.

Diana. In short—I——cannot go with you.
Har. But before me—into the garden—Won't you?

AIR—DIANA.

Come then, pining, peevish lover,
Tell me what to do and say;
From your doleful dumps recover,
Smile, and it shall have its way.

With their humours thus to teaze us,
Men are sure the strangest elves!
Silly creatures, would you please us,
You should still seem pleased yourselves.

[Exit.

Enter COLONEL OLDBOY.

Col. O. Hey-day! what's the meaning of this? Who is it that went out of the room there? Have you and my daughter been in conference, Mr Harman?

Har. Yes, 'faith, sir; she has been taking me to task here very severely, with regard to this affair; and she has said so much against it, and put it into such a strange light——

Col. O. A busy, impertinent baggage! egad I wish I had catched her meddling, and after I ordered her not: but you have sent to the girl, and you say she is ready to go with you; you must not disappoint her now.

Har. No, no, Colonel; I always have politeness enough to hear a lady's reasons; but constancy enough to keep a will of my own.

Col. O. Very well—now let me ask you—don't you think it would be proper, upon this occasion, to have a letter ready writ for the father, to let him know who has got his daughter, and so forth?

Har. Certainly, sir; and I'll write it directly.

Col. O. You write it! you be damned! I won't trust

you with it; I tell you, Harman, you'll commit some cursed blunder, if you don't leave the management of this whole affair to me: I have writ the letter for you myself.

Har. Have you, sir?

Col. O. Ay—here, read it: I think it's the thing: however, you are welcome to make any alteration.

Har. *Sir, I have loved your daughter a great while, secretly; she assures me there is no hope of your consenting to our marriage; I therefore take her without it. I am a gentleman who will use her well; and, when you consider the matter, I dare swear you will be willing to give her a fortune. If not, you shall find I dare behave myself like a man—A word to the wise—You must expect to hear from me in another style.*

Col. O. Now, sir, I will tell you what you must do with this letter: as soon as you have got off with the girl, sir, send your servant back, to leave it at the house, with orders to have it delivered to the old gentleman.

Har. Upon my honour, I will, Colonel.

Col. O. Then look into the court there, sir; a chaise with four of the prettiest bay geldings in England, with two boys in scarlet and silver jackets, that will whisk you along.

Har. Boys, Colonel! Little Cupids, to transport me to the summit of my desires.

Col. O. Ay, but for all that, it mayn't be amiss for me to talk to them a little out of the window for you. Dick, come hither; you are to go with this gentleman, and do whatever he bids you; and take into the chaise whoever he pleases; and drive like devils, do you hear? but be kind to the dumb beasts.

Har. Leave that to me, sir——And so, my dear Colonel—bon voyage. [*Exit.*

Enter LADY MARY OLDBOY.

Lady M. O. Mr Oldboy, here is a note from Sir John Flowerdale; it is addressed to me, entreating my son to come over there again this morning. A maid brought it: she is in the anti-chamber—We had better speak to her—Child, child, why don't you come in?

Jenny. [*Without.*] I chuse to stay where I am, if your ladyship pleases.

Lady M. O. Stay where you are! why so?

Enter JENNY.

Jenny. I am afraid of the old gentleman there.

Col. O. Afraid of me, hussy?

Lady M. O. Pray, Colonel, have patience—Afraid—Here is something at the bottom of this—What did you mean by that expression, child?

Jenny. Why, the Colonel knows very well, madam, he wanted to be rude with me yesterday.

Lady M. O. Oh, Mr Oldboy!

Col. O. Lady Mary, don't provoke me; but let me talk to the girl about her business. How came you to bring this note here?

Jenny. Why, Sir John gave it to me, to deliver to my uncle Jenkins, and I took it down to his house; but while we were talking together, he remembered that he had some business with Sir John, so he desired me to bring it, because he said it was not proper to be sent by any of the common servants.

Lady M. O. Colonel, look in my face, and help blushing if you can.

Col. O. What the plague's the matter, my lady! I have not been wronging you, now, as you call it.

Jenny. Indeed, madam, he offered to make me his kept madam: I am sure his usage of me put me into such a twitter, that I did not know what I was doing all the day after.

Lady M. O. I don't doubt it, though I so lately forgave him: but, as the poet says, his sex is all deceit. Read Pamela, child, and resist temptation.

Jenny. Yes, madam, I will.

Col. O. Why, I tell you, my lady, it was all a joke.

Jenny. No, sir, it was no joke; you made me a proffer of money, so you did; whereby I told you, you had a lady of your own, and that though she was old, you had no right to despise her.

Lady M. O. And how dare you, mistress, make use of my name? Is it for such trollops as you to talk of persons of distinction behind their backs?

Jenny. Why, madam, I only said you was in years.

Lady M. O. Sir John Flowerdale shall be informed of your impertinence, and you shall be turned out of the family; I see you are a confident creature, and I believe you are no better than you should be.

Jenny. I scorn your words, madam.

Lady M. O. Get out of the room; how dare you stay in this room to talk impudently to me?

Jenny. Very well, madam, I shall let my lady know how you have used me; but I sha'n't be turned out of my place, madam, nor at a loss, if I am; and if you are angry with every one that won't say you are young, I believe there is very few you will keep friends with!

AIR.

I wonder, I'm sure, why this fuss should be made?
For my part, I'm neither ashamed nor afraid
Of what I have done, nor of what I have said,
A servant, I hope, is no slave;
And though, to their shames,
Some ladies call names,
I know better how to behave.
Times are not so bad,
If occasion I had,

Nor my character such I need starve on't.
And, for going away,
I don't want to stay,
And so I'm your ladyship's servant. [Exit.

Enter MR JESSAMY.

Jess. What is the matter here?

Lady M. O. I will have a separate maintenance, I will, indeed. Only a new instance of your father's infidelity, my dear. Then with such low wretches, farmers' daughters, and servant wenches: but any thing with a cap on, 'tis all the same to him.

Jess. Upon my word, sir, I am sorry to tell you, that those practices very ill suit the character which you ought to endeavour to support in the world.

Lady M. O. Is this a recompence for my love and regard; I, who have been tender and faithful as a turtle-dove?

Jess. A man of your birth and distinction should, methinks, have views of a higher nature, than such low, such vulgar libertinism.

Lady M. O. Consider my birth and family too: Lady Mary Jessamy might have had the best matches in England.

Jess. Then, sir, your grey hairs.

Lady M. O. I, that have brought you so many lovely, sweet babes.

Jess. Nay, sir, it is a reflection on me.

Lady M. O. The heinous sin too——

Jess. Indeed, sir, I blush for you.

Col. O. 'Sdeath and fire! you little effeminate puppy, do you know who you talk to?—And you, madam, do you know who I am?—Get up to your chamber, or, zounds, I'll make such a——

Lady M. O. Ah! my dear, come away from him. [Exit.

Enter SERVANT.

Col. O. Am I to be tutored and called to an account? How now, you scoundrel, what do you want?

Serv. A letter, sir.

Col. O. A letter from whom, sirrah?

Serv. The gentleman's servant, an't please your honour, that left this just now, in the post-chaise—the gentleman my young lady went away with.

Col. O. Your young lady, you dog—What gentleman? What young lady, sirrah?

Jess. There is some mystery in this—With your leave, sir, I'll open the letter.

Col. O. What are you going to do, you jackanapes? You sha'n't open a letter of mine,—Dy,—Diana—Somebody call my daughter to me there—*To John Oldboy, Esq.—Sir, I have loved your daughter a great while secretly—Consenting to our marriage——*

Jess. So, so.

Col. O. You villain—you dog, what is it you have brought me here?

Serv. Please your honour, if you'll have patience, I'll tell your honour—As I told your honour before, the gentleman's servant that went off just now in the post-chaise, came to the gate, and left it after his master was gone. I saw my young lady go into the chaise with the gentleman.

Col. O. Call all the servants in the house; let horses be saddled directly—every one take a different road.

Serv. Why, your honour, Dick said it was by your own orders.

Col. O. My orders! you rascal? I thought he was going to run away with another gentleman's daughter—Dy—Diana Oldboy. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Jess. Don't waste your lungs to no purpose, sir; your daughter is half a dozen miles off by this time. Besides, the matter is entirely of your own contriving, as well as the letter and spirit of this elegant epistle.

Col. O. You are a coxcomb, and I'll disinherit you; the letter is none of my writing; it was writ by the devil, and the devil contrived it. Diana! Margaret! my Lady Mary! William! John!—— [*Exit.*

Jess. I am very glad of this, prodigiously glad of it, upon my honour—he! he! he!—it will be a jest this hundred years. [*Bells ring violently on both sides.*] What's the matter now? O! her ladyship has heard of it, and is at her bell; and the Colonel answers her. A pretty duet; but a little too much upon the forte methinks: it would be a diverting thing, now, to stand unseen at the old gentleman's elbow.

[*Retires up the Stage.*

Enter COLONEL OLDBOY, *with one Boot, a Great Coat on his Arm, &c. followed by several* SERVANTS.

Col. O. She's gone, by the lord; fairly stole away, with that poaching, coney-catching rascal! However, I won't follow her; no, damme! take my whip, and my cap, and my coat, and order the groom to unsaddle the horses; I won't follow her the length of a spur-leather. Come here, you sir, and pull off my boot; [*Whistles.*] she has made a fool of me once; she sha'n't do it a second time; not but I'll be revenged too, for I'll never give her sixpence; the disappointment will put the scoundrel out of temper, and he'll thrash her a dozen times a day; this thought pleases me; I hope he'll do it. What do you stand gaping and staring at, you impudent dogs? are you laughing at me? I'll teach you to be merry at my expence——

[*Exit, driving them away.*

SCENE II.

CLARISSA's *Dressing-Room.*

Enter CLARISSA, *with a Book in her Hand, followed by* JENNY.

Clar. Where have you been, Jenny? I was inquiring for you—why will you go out, without letting me know?

Jenny. Dear ma'am, never any thing happened so unlucky! I am sorry you wanted me—But I was sent to Colonel Oldboy's with a letter; where I have been so used—Lord have mercy upon me—quality indeed—I say, quality—pray, madam, do you think that I looks any ways like an immodest parson—to be sure I have a gay air, and I can't help it, and I loves to appear a little genteelish, that's what I do.

Clar. Jenny, take away this book.

Jenny. Heaven preserve me, madam! you are crying!

Clar. O, my dear Jenny!

Jenny. My dear mistress, what's the matter?

Clar. I am undone.

Jenny. No, madam; no, Lord forbid!

Clar. I am indeed—I have been rash enough to discover my weakness for a man, who treats me with contempt.

Jenny. Is Mr Lionel ungrateful, then?

Clar. I have lost his esteem for ever, Jenny. Since

Jenny. Then he is a nasty, barbarous, inhuman brute.

Clar. Hold, Jenny, hold; it is all my fault.

Jenny. Your fault, madam! I wish I was to hear such a word come out of his mouth; if he was a minister to-morrow, and to say such a thing from his pulpit, and I by, I'd tell him it was false, upon the spot.

Clar. Somebody's at the door; see who it is.

[*Tapping at the Door.*

Jenny. You in fault indeed—that I know to be the most virtuousest, nicest, most delicatest——

Clar. How now?

Jenny. Madam, it's a message from Mr Lionel. If you are alone, and at leisure, he would be glad to wait upon you: I'll tell him, madam, that you are busy.

Clar. Where is he, Jenny?

Jenny. In the study, the man says.

Clar. Then go to him, and tell him I should be glad to see him: but do not bring him up immediately, because I will stand upon the balcony a few minutes for a little air.

Jenny. Do so, dear madam, for your eyes are as red as a ferret's; you are ready to faint too; mercy on us! for what do you grieve and vex yourself—if I was as you— [*Exit.*

Clar. Oh!

AIR.

Why with sighs my heart is swelling,
Why with tears my eyes o'erflow;
Ask me not, 'tis past the telling,
Mute involuntary woe.

Who to winds and waves a stranger,
Vent'rous tempts the inconstant seas,
In each billow fancies danger,
Shrinks at every rising breeze. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE *and* JENKINS.

Sir J. F. So, then the mystery is discovered;—but is it possible that my daughter's refusal of Colonel Oldboy's son should proceed from a clandestine engagement, and that engagement with Lionel?

Jenk. My niece, sir, is in her young lady's secrets; and, Lord knows, she had little design to betray them; but having remarked some odd expressions of her's yesterday, when she came down to me this morning with the letter, I questioned her; and, in short, drew the whole affair out; upon which I feigned a recollection of some business with you, and desired her to carry the letter to Colonel Oldboy's herself, while I came up hither. Yes, sir, and it is my duty to tell you; else I would rather die than be the means of wounding the heart of my dear young lady; for if there is one upon earth of truly noble and delicate sentiments——

Sir J. F. I thought so once, Jenkins.

Jenk. And think so still: Oh, good Sir John, now is the time for you to exert that character of worth and gentleness, which the world, so deservedly, has given you. You have, indeed, cause to be offended; but, consider, sir, your daughter is young, beautiful, and amiable; the poor youth unexperienced, sensible, and at a time of life when such temptations are hard to be resisted: their opportunities were many, their cast of thinking the same.—

Sir J. F. Jenkins, I can allow for all these things; but the young hypocrites, there's the thing, Jenkins; their hypocrisy, their hypocrisy wounds me.

Jenk. Call it by a gentler name, sir; modesty on

Jenk. Sir, as we were standing in the next room, I heard a message delivered from Mr Lionel, desiring leave to wait upon your daughter; I dare swear they will be here presently; suppose we were to step into that closet, and overhear their conversation?

Sir J. F. What, Jenkins, after having lived so many years in confidence with my child, shall I become an eves-dropper, to detect her?

Jenk. It is necessary at present.—Come in, my dear master, let us only consider that we were once young like them; subject to the same passions, the same indiscretions; and it is the duty of every man to pardon errors incident to his kind. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CLARISSA *and* LIONEL.

Clar. Sir, you desired to speak to me; I need not tell you the present situation of my heart; it is full. Whatever you have to say, I beg you will explain yourself; and, if possible, rid me of the anxiety under which I have laboured for some hours.

Lionel. Madam, your anxiety cannot be greater than mine; I come, indeed, to speak to you; and yet, I know not how; I come to advise you, shall I say, as a friend? yes, as a friend to your glory, your felicity; dearer to me than my life.

Clar. Go on, sir.

Lionel. Sir John Flowerdale, madam, is such a father as few are blessed with; his care, his prudence has provided for you a match—Your refusal renders him inconsolable. Listen to no suggestions that would pervert you from your duty, but make the worthiest of men happy by submitting to his will.

Clar. How, sir, after what passed between us yesterday evening, can you advise me to marry Mr Jessamy?

Lionel. I would advise you to marry any one, madam, rather than a villain.

Clar. A villain, sir?

Lionel. I should be the worst of villains, madam, was I to talk to you in any other strain: Nay, am I not a villain, at once treacherous and ungrateful? Received into this house as an asylum, what have I done? Betrayed the confidence of the friend that trusted me; endeavoured to sacrifice his peace, and the honour of his family, to my own unwarrantable desires.

Clar. Say no more, sir; say no more; I see my error too late; I have parted from the rules prescribed to my sex; I have mistaken indecorum for a laudable sincerity; and it is just I should meet with the treatment my imprudence deserves.

Lionel. Oh, my Clarissa! my heart is broke; I am hateful to myself, for loving you;—yet, before I leave you for ever, I will once more touch that lovely hand—indulge my fondness with a last look—pray for your health and prosperity.

Clar. Can you forsake me?—Have I then given my affections to a man who rejects and disregards them? —Let me throw myself at my father's feet: he is generous and compassionate:—He knows your worth—

Lionel. Mention it not—were you stripped of fortune, reduced to the meanest station, and I a monarch of the globe, I should glory in raising you to universal empire; but as it is——

AIR.

O dry those tears, like melted ore,
Fast dropping on my heart they fall:
Think, think no more of me; no more

Enter JENNY.

Jenny. O, madam! I have betrayed you. I have gone and said something I should not have said to my uncle Jenkins; and, as sure as day, he has gone and told it all to Sir John.

Enter SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE *and* JENKINS.

Clar. My father!

Sir J. F. Go, Jenkins, and desire that young gentleman to come back.—[*Exit* JENKINS.] stay where you are.—But, what have I done to you, my child? How have I deserved, that you should treat me like an enemy? Has there been any undesigned rigour in my conduct, or terror in my looks?

Clar. Oh, sir!

Enter JENKINS *and* LIONEL.

Jenk. Here is Mr Lionel.

Sir J. F. Come in.—When I tell you, that I am instructed in all your proceedings, and that I have been ear-witness to your conversation in this place, you will, perhaps, imagine what my thoughts are of you, and the measures which justice prescribes me to follow.

Lionel. Sir, I have nothing to say in my own defence; I stand before you, self-convicted, self-condemned, and shall submit without murmuring to the sentence of my judge.

Sir J. F. As for you, Clarissa, since your earliest infancy, you have known no parent but me; I have been to you, at once, both father and mother; and, that I might the better fulfil those united duties, though left a widower in the prime of my days, I would never enter into a second marriage.—I loved you for your likeness to your dear mother; but that mother never

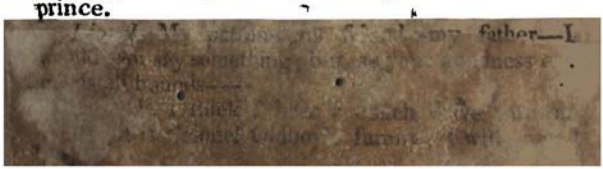
deceived me—and there the likeness fails—you have repaid my affection with dissimulation.—Clarissa, you should have trusted me.—As for you, Mr Lionel, what terms can I find strong enough to paint the excess of my friendship!—I loved, I esteemed, I honoured your father: he was a brave, a generous, and a sincere man; I thought you inherited his good qualities—you were left an orphan; I adopted you, put you upon the footing of my own son; educated you like a gentleman; and designed you for a profession, to which I thought your virtues would have been an ornament.—What return you have made me, you seem to be acquainted with yourself, and, therefore, I shall not repeat it—Yet, remember, as an aggravation of your guilt, that the last mark of my bounty was conferred upon you in the very instant when you were undermining my designs. Now, sir, I have but one thing more to say to you—take my daughter; was she worth a million, she is at your service.

Lionel. To me, sir!—your daughter—do you give her to me?—Without fortune—without friends—without——

Sir J. F. You have them all in your heart; him, whom virtue raises, fortune cannot abase.

Clar. O, sir, let me on my knees kiss that dear hand—acknowledge my error, and entreat forgiveness and blessing.

Sir J. F. You have not erred, my dear daughter; you have distinguished. It is I should ask pardon, for this little trial of you, for I am happier in the son-in-law you have given me, than if you had married a prince.



receive them. Don't make yourself uneasy at this; we must endeavour to pacify them as well as we can. My dear Lionel, if I have made you happy, you have made me so. Heaven bless you, my children, and make you deserving of one another.

[*Exeunt* SIR JOHN *and* JENKINS.

Jenny. O dear, madam, upon my knees, I humbly beg your forgiveness.—Dear Mr Lionel, forgive me —I did not design to discover it, indeed——and you won't turn me off, madam, will you? I'll serve you for nothing.

Clar. Get up, my good Jenny, I freely forgive you, if there is any thing to be forgiven. I know you love me, and I am sure here is one who will join with me in rewarding your services.

Jenny. Well, if I did not know, as sure as could be, that some good would happen, by my left eye itching this morning! [*Exit.*

Lionel. *O bliss unexpected! my joys overpow'r me!*
My love, my Clarissa, what words shall I find!
Remorse, desperation, no longer devour me—
He bless'd us, and peace is restored to my mind.

Clar. *He bless'd us! O rapture! Like one I recover*
Whom death had appall'd, without hope, without aid;
A moment deprived me of father and lover;
A moment restores, and my pains are repaid.

Lionel. *Forsaken, abandon'd,*

Clar. ——————*What folly! what blindness!*

Lionel. *We fortune accused;*

Clar. *And the fates that decreed.* [Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Another Apartment in SIR JOHN'S *House.*

Enter LADY MARY OLDBOY, MR JESSAMY *leading her.*

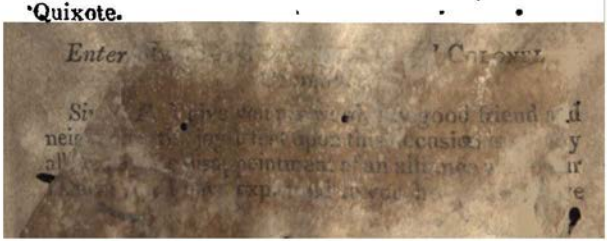
Lady M. O. 'Tis all in vain, my dear—set me down any where; I can't go a step further—I knew, when Mr Oldboy insisted upon my coming, that I should be seized with a megrim by the way; and it's well I did not die in the coach.

Jess. But, pr'ythee, why will you let yourself be affected with such trifles—Nothing more common than for young women of fashion to go off with low fellows.

Lady M. O. Only feel, my dear, how I tremble! Not a nerve but what is in agitation; and my blood runs cold, cold!

Jess. Well, but Lady Mary, don't let us expose ourselves to those people! I see there is not one of the rascals about us, that has not a grin upon his countenance.

Lady M. O. Expose ourselves, my dear! Your father will be as ridiculous as Hudibras, or Don Quixote.



happened—You see my situation; and, as you are kind enough to consider it yourself, I hope you will excuse it to your son.

Lady M. O. Sir John Flowerdale, how do you do? You see we have obeyed your summons; and I have the pleasure to assure you, that my son yielded to my entreaties with very little disagreement; in short, if I may speak metaphorically, he is content to stand candidate again, notwithstanding his late repulse, when he hopes for an unanimous election.

Col. O. My lady, you may save your rhetoric; for the borough is disposed of to a worthier member.

Jess. What do you say, sir?

Enter LIONEL *and* CLARISSA.

Sir J. F. Here are my son and daughter.

Lady M. O. Is this pretty, Sir John?

Sir J. F. Believe me, madam, it is not for want of a just sense of Mr Jessamy's merit that this affair has gone off on my side; but the heart is a delicate thing, and after it has once felt, if the object is meritorious, the impression is not easily effaced; it would therefore have been an injury to him, to have given him in appearance what another in reality possessed.

Jess. Upon my honour, upon my soul, Sir John, I am not the least offended at this *contre temps*—Pray, Lady Mary, say no more about it.

Col. O. Tol, lol, lol, lol.

Sir J. F. But, my dear Colonel, I am afraid, after all, this affair is taken amiss by you; yes, I see you are angry on your son's account; but let me repeat it, I have a very high opinion of his merit.

Col. O. Ay! that's more than I have. Taken amiss! I don't take any thing amiss; I never was in better spirits, or more pleased, in my life.

Sir J. F. Come, you are uneasy at something, Colonel?

Col. O. Me! gad I am not uneasy—Are you a justice of peace? Then you could give me a warrant, cou'dn't you? You must know, Sir John, a little accident has happened in my family since I saw you last, you and I may shake hands—Daughters, sir, daughters! Yours has snapped at a young fellow, without your approbation; and how do you think mine has served me this morning?—only run away with the scoundrel I brought to dinner here yesterday.

Sir J. F. I am excessively concerned.

Col. O. Now I'm not a bit concerned—No, damn me, I am glad it has happened; yet, thus far I'll confess, I should be sorry that either of them would come in my way, because a man's temper may sometimes get the better of him, and I believe I should be tempted to break her neck, and blow his brains out.

Clar. But pray, sir, explain this affair.

Col. O. I can explain it no farther—Dy, my daughter Dy, has run away from us.

Enter DIANA *and* HARMAN.

Diana. No, my dear papa, I am not run away; and upon my knees I entreat your pardon for the folly I have committed; but, let it be some alleviation, that duty and affection were too strong to suffer me to carry it to extremity: and, if you knew the agony I have been in, since I saw you last—

Lady M. O. How's this?

Har. Sir, I restore your daughter to you; whose fault, as far as it goes, I must also take upon myself; we have been known to each other for some time, as Lady Richly, your sister, in London, can acquaint

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